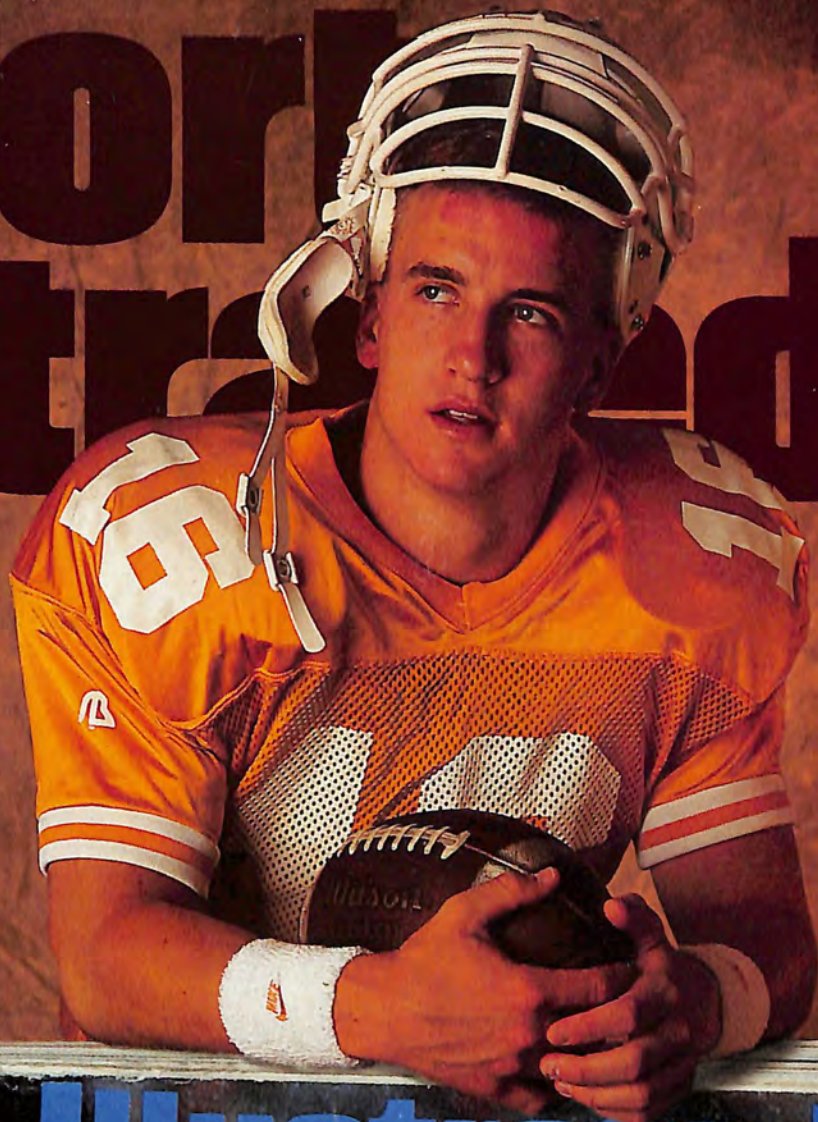


AUGUST 26, 1996  
\$3.50 (CAN. \$3.95)

# Sports Illustrated

## College Football '96

*IN HIS FATHER'S IMAGE:  
PEYTON MANNING  
IDOL OF No. 1 TENNESSEE*



# Sports Illustrated

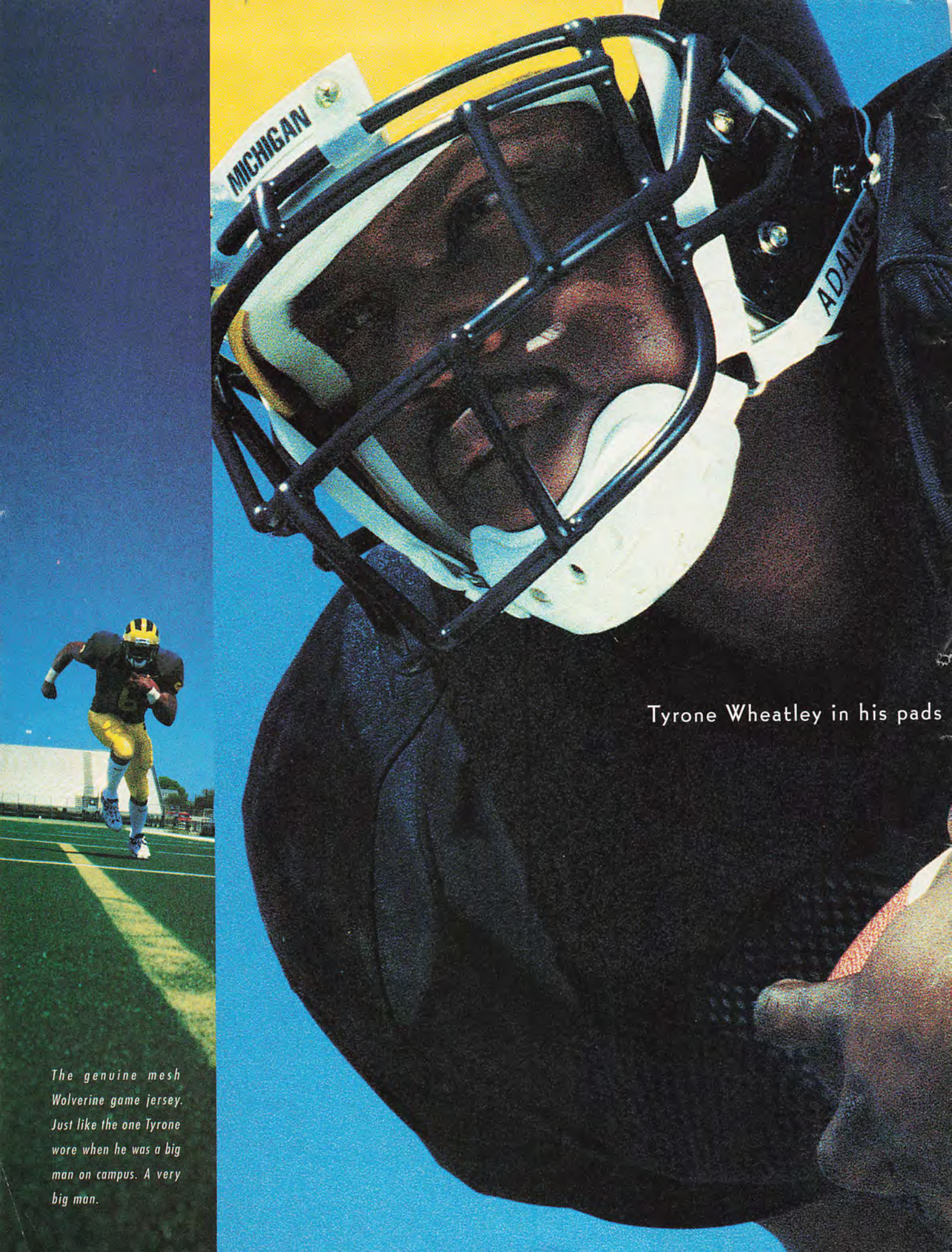
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## TOP 20 IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL

*Archie Manning  
Idol of Ole Miss*



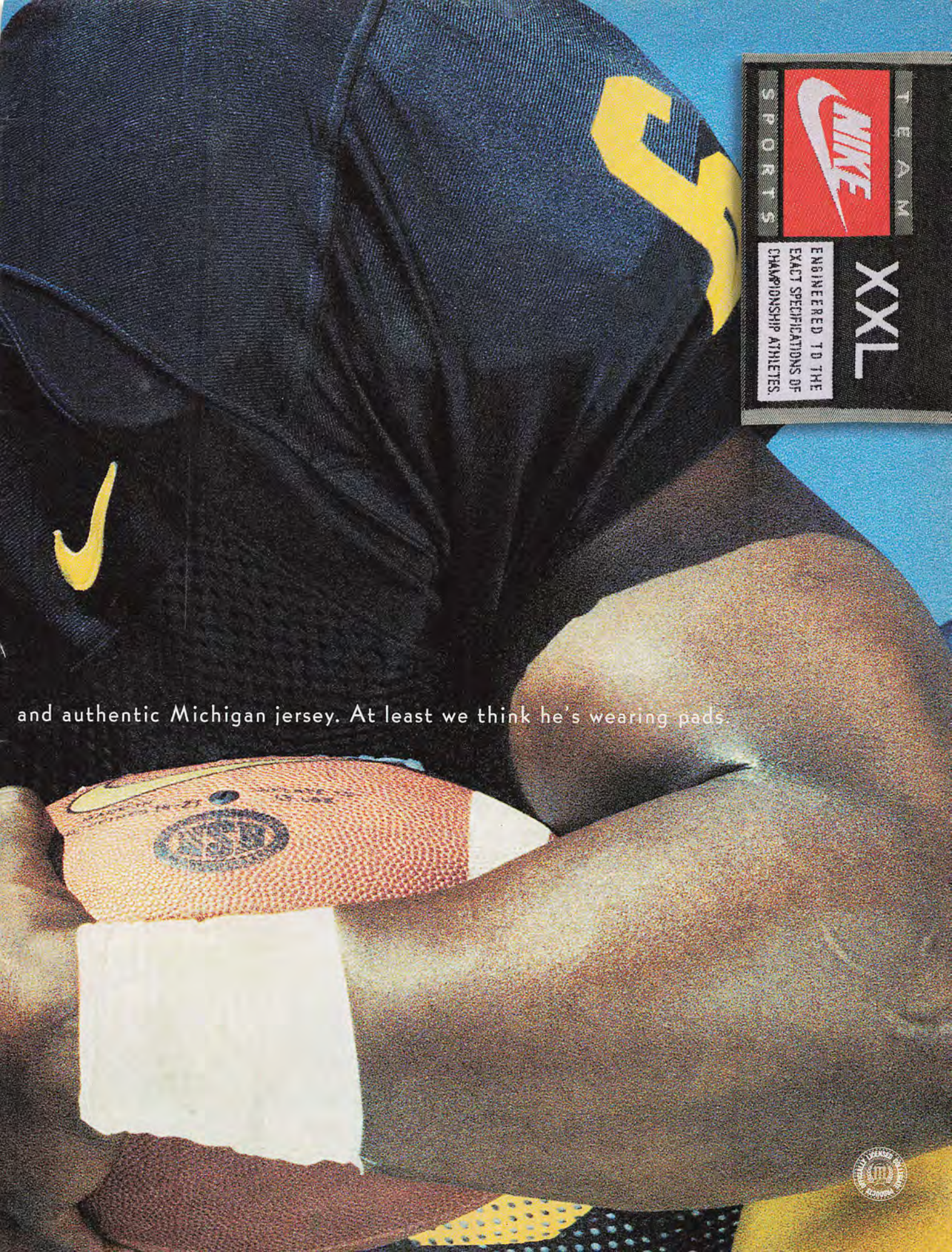




Tyrone Wheatley in his pads

*The genuine mesh  
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Just like the one Tyrone  
wore when he was a big  
man on campus. A very  
big man.*





SPORTS



TEAM

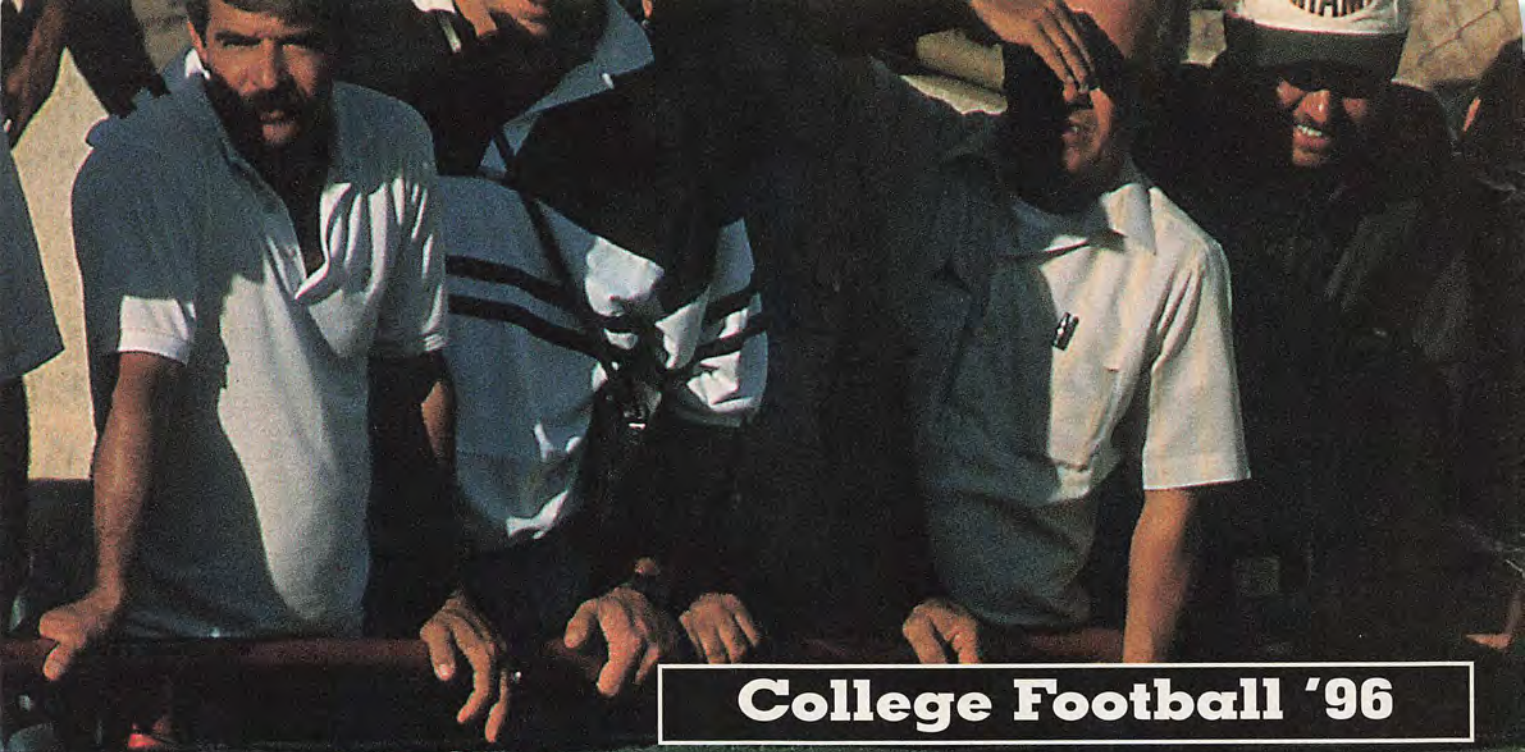
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CHAMPIONSHIP ATHLETES.

and authentic Michigan jersey. At least we think he's wearing pads







## College Football '96

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Cover Photograph by Bill Frakes;

Archie Manning cover  
photograph by Arthur Shay

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### **Fernando's Hideaway?**

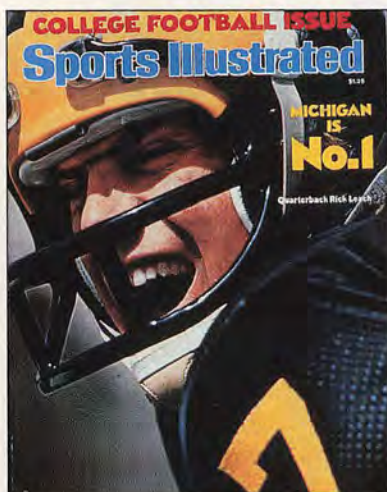
As major league baseball debuted south of the border, with three games in Monterrey, fans of all sorts surrounded the man of the moment, the Padres' Mexican-born Fernando Valenzuela, even in that pitcher's sanctuary, the bullpen (page 18).

Photograph by John Iacono



## CATCHING UP WITH...

Michigan quarterback Rick Leach • SEPTEMBER 6, 1976



THE COVER subject of our college football preview issue 20 years ago was Michigan's 19-year-old sophomore quarterback, Rick Leach. SI showed prescience in giving the youngster such treatment: That year Leach would lead Michigan to the first of three straight Rose Bowls, and in his four years at Ann Arbor he would set two NCAA records: most touchdowns running and passing (79) and most points responsible for (474), both since broken. Leach was drafted by the Denver Broncos of the NFL and the Montreal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League, but he chose to pursue a career in baseball. That seemed wise: Leach, a Michigan native who had played centerfield brilliantly for the Wolverines, was drafted by the Detroit Tigers in the first round in 1979, and he looked forward to playing close to home. But he would learn, as we all must, that our best-laid schemes often go awry.

Leach was not an instant sensation with the Tigers. He spent two seasons in the minors and another two bouncing between the bushes and the parent club. He finally stuck with Detroit in 1983, but he hit only .248 in 99 games as a part-timer. The Tigers dropped him in 1984, and he signed a minor league contract with the Toronto Blue Jays. He played his first full season in Toronto in '86 and had his best year, batting .309 in 110 games. Then the trouble began. In '87 Leach went AWOL from the Jays for several days. The absence was dismissed under the rubric of "personal problems"—but, in fact, he had begun using cocaine. He signed with the Texas Rangers as a free agent in 1989, and the next year he signed with the San Francisco Giants.

Leach was immensely popular with Giants players and fans. He hit .293 in 78 games, but then he came a cropper: On Aug. 6, 1990, after failing a drug test, he was suspended for 60 days and ordered to undergo rehabilitation. Leach rejoined the Giants for spring training in 1991, but San Francisco, loaded with outfielders, released him. He was profoundly disappointed, but he said he had emerged from the ordeal of drug rehab "realizing how much I've really got going in my life."

Happily, Leach has gone on with that life. He works as an insurance agent in Farmington Hills, Mich., where he lives with his wife, Angela, and their three sons. Rick has, at 39, achieved blessed serenity. "I made a mistake," he says, "and I was held accountable for it. There really is nothing more to say."

—RON FIMRITE

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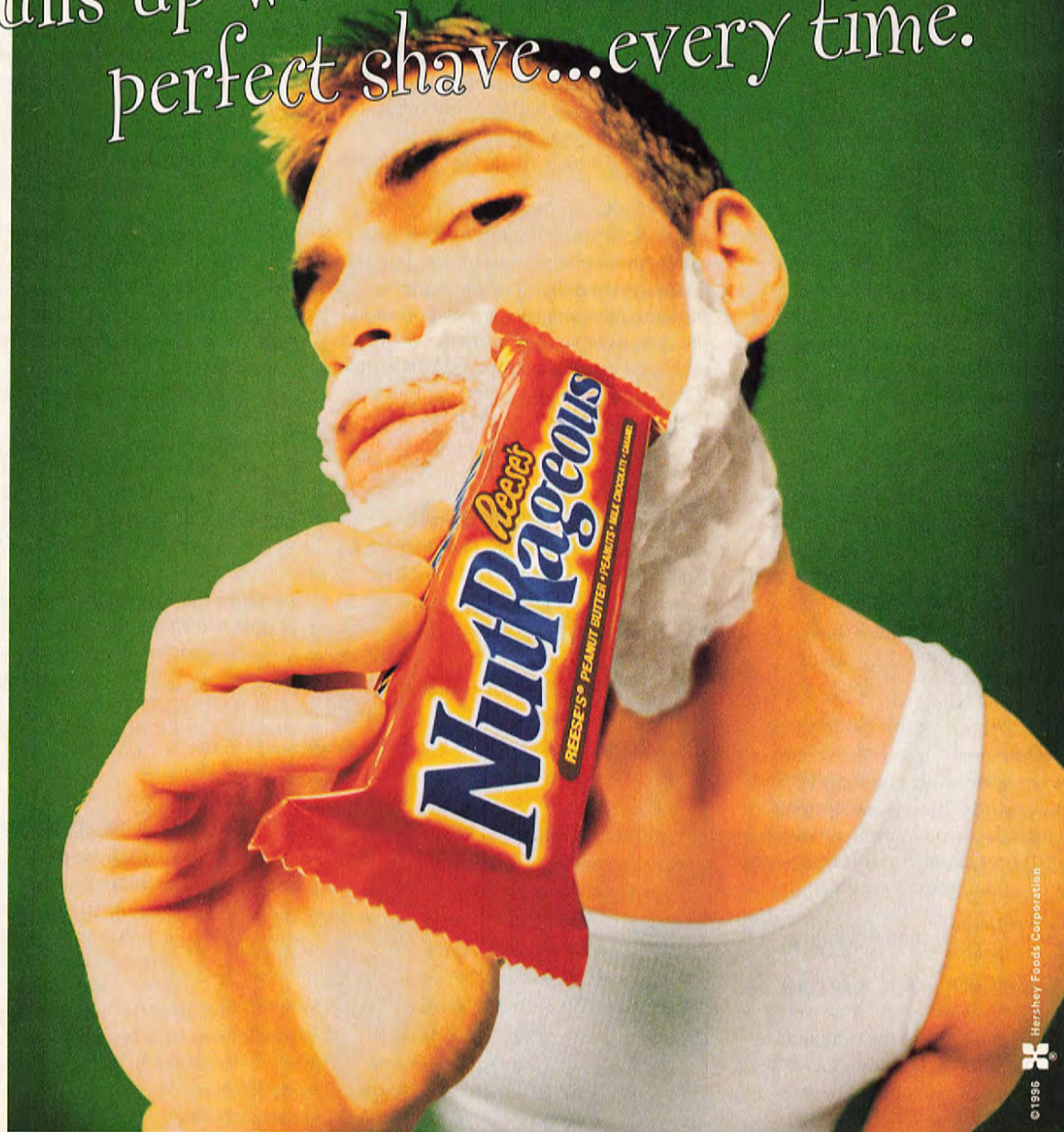
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## Lewis is a great athlete, but his insatiable desire to win an unprecedented 10 gold medals tainted his accomplishments.

DEBBIE LINGLE, COLUMBIA, Mo.

### Golden Jump

Thank you for having Carl Lewis, the greatest track and field athlete of all time, on your cover. Rick Reilly's article (*Leap to Glory*, Aug. 5) was a fitting tribute to an Olympian who is talented, winning, controversial—and never boring.

ANUKAMPA L. WALDEN, San Francisco

Carl Lewis may be, as you contend on your cover, "the best ever" in a particular context, i.e., as an Olympic long jumper, but is his record the equal of Paavo Nurmi's? Or Al Oerter's? Among Nurmi's nine gold-medal-winning track and field performances were Olympic record-setting efforts in three different events, two set in 1924 in the space of about 75 minutes. Oerter's discus gold medals in four consecutive Games represent four consecutive Olympic records. Lewis's exceptional career includes two Olympic records, set in different events in different years, but his personal performances in the long jump peaked in 1988. His '96 jump is the poorest of his medal-winning efforts.

RICHARD J. JENSEN, Notre Dame, Ind.

Since 1990, and despite the demands of training and athletic stardom, Lewis's efforts to promote organ and tissue donation have made him a champion to the more than 46,000 Americans who are awaiting lifesaving organ transplants.

**Can Lewis be considered a greater Olympian than Nurmi, who also won nine golds but set more records?**

No celebrity has done more for this cause than Carl Lewis.

LISA TUNNELL, Chairman  
Georgia Coalition on Donation  
Atlanta

### The Real Dream Team

Kudos to Steve Rushin for his article on the women's Olympic softball team (*Playing with Heart*, July 29). This was the real Dream Team. I was rooting for the women before I read the article, but by the time I was halfway through it, I was ready to stand up and salute.

STEPHEN SWAIN, Olive Branch, Miss.

The Olympics are supposed to be about people competing because their hearts will them to, not because of the almighty endorsement dollar. I would rather watch the softball team play hard and promote the dreams of youngsters than watch athletes who make wide-eyed kids wonder if they can ever make as much money as those guys who wear those fancy shoes.

INGRID MARCELIS, Arcata, Calif.

### Covering the Bomb

A big thank you to John Schulian for his Aug. 5 POINT AFTER about the NBC

Olympic coverage. Bob Costas was far below his usual excellent standards, and some of the choices of court-side announcers were peculiar, but the failure to update viewers on the bomb's aftereffects was the last straw.

CAROLYN STRUG, New York City

Schulian was completely off base. Yes, it is a tragedy that a pipe bomb caused two deaths and injured many, but it would have been misguided to devote coverage to the bombing at the expense of the athletes. They worked too hard to have their time overshadowed by someone's evil act.

JENNIFER CASTO, Sacramento

I spent the final week of the Olympics in Atlanta with a friend, and other than paying our respects at the site, we hardly discussed the bombing. That wasn't why we were in Atlanta. Apparently NBC felt the same way.

FRANKIE FULLERTON, Charlotte

If you wanted coverage of the bombing, you had only to switch to one of a dozen or more networks that were covering it, but only NBC had the Olympics.

D. LURIE, Santa Rosa, Calif.

I believe that when all is said and done, people will remember the Atlanta Olympics not for the bombing but for the success of the city in hosting the largest Olympics in history and for the successes of the athletes themselves.

DAVID PYLES, Atlanta

### Spatting Swimmers

As one who also has exercise-induced asthma, I was looking forward to seeing Tom Dolan swim in Atlanta (*Go Blue!* July 29). His achievements in the face of this illness are remarkable. However, his arrogant treatment of teammate Eric Namesnik after the 400-meter individual medley can only be described as shabby.

JAMES R. PAULSEN, Kansas City, Mo.



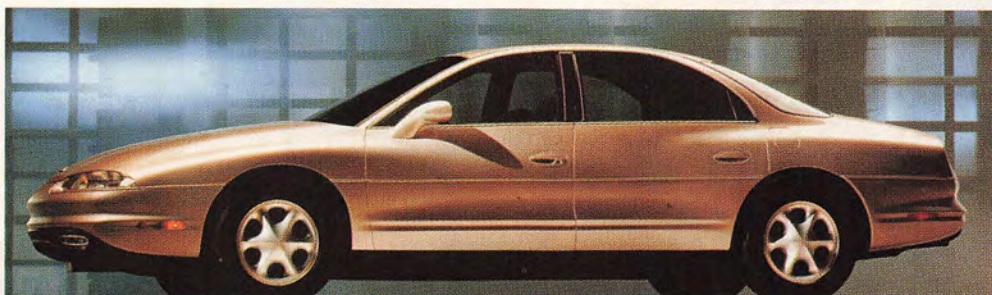
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**Sydney Foster**

**WILTON, CONN.**

**April Radovich**

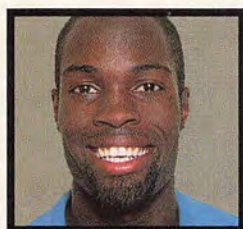
**EL CAJON, CALIF.**

Foster, a recent graduate of Wilton High, won the individual all-around gymnastics title at the state high school championships to lead the Lady Warriors to the Connecticut Class S team title for the third consecutive year. She later propelled the Connecticut all-stars to the national high school crown by winning the beam. April, 17, was named to the YMCA All-America team after prevailing in the all-around and placing second in the vault and the floor exercises in her division at the YMCA nationals. As a junior on the Granite Hills High team last winter, she placed second in the all-around at the CIF-San Diego County tournament.



CHARLES ABEL

J.T. MACMILLAN

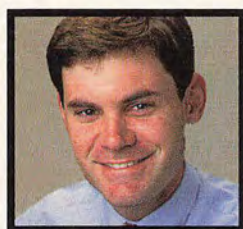


**Aquil Abdullah**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Abdullah, 23, an assistant administrator in a physics lab, won the single sculls title at the U.S. rowing championships by edging Andy McMarlin, 27, of Vienna, Va., by 1.2 seconds. Abdullah earned a silver medal in the quadruple sculls at the 1995 Olympic Festival.

DAVID DOYLE

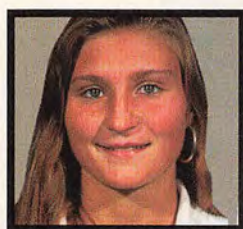


**Robert Gerwin**

**MARIEMONT, OHIO**

Gerwin, 29, an industrial safety equipment salesman, won the Ohio amateur golf crown in Dayton and the Mid-Amateur (for players more than 25 years old) Championships in Cincinnati to become the first player to sweep the two tournaments in the same year.

DENNY LANDWEHR

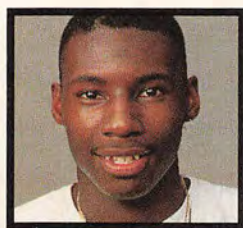


**Emily Feeney**

**NORTH KINGSTOWN, R.I.**

Feeney, 17, scored five goals to lead the East to a 5-1 win in the Puma Cup all-star girls' soccer game. As a senior forward at North Kingstown High, she had 44 goals and 48 assists in leading the Skippers to the Division I state title for the third year in a row. She will play for Duke this fall.

JOE MCGOVERN



**Melvin Lister**

**LEAVENWORTH, KANS.**

Lister, a recent graduate who was a runner and a triple jumper at Leavenworth High, became the first three-time winner of the Wayne F. Campbell Award as the Kansas City area's top high school track and field athlete. He was state 6A champion in the 200 and 400 meters and in the triple jump.

ELI REICHMAN

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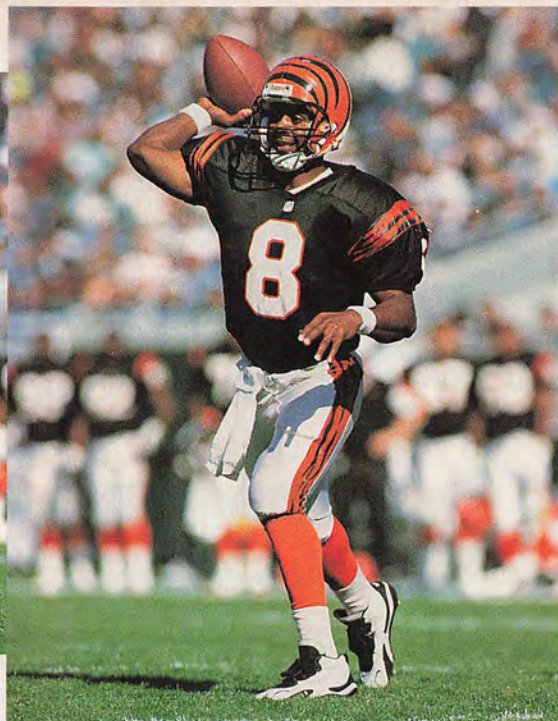
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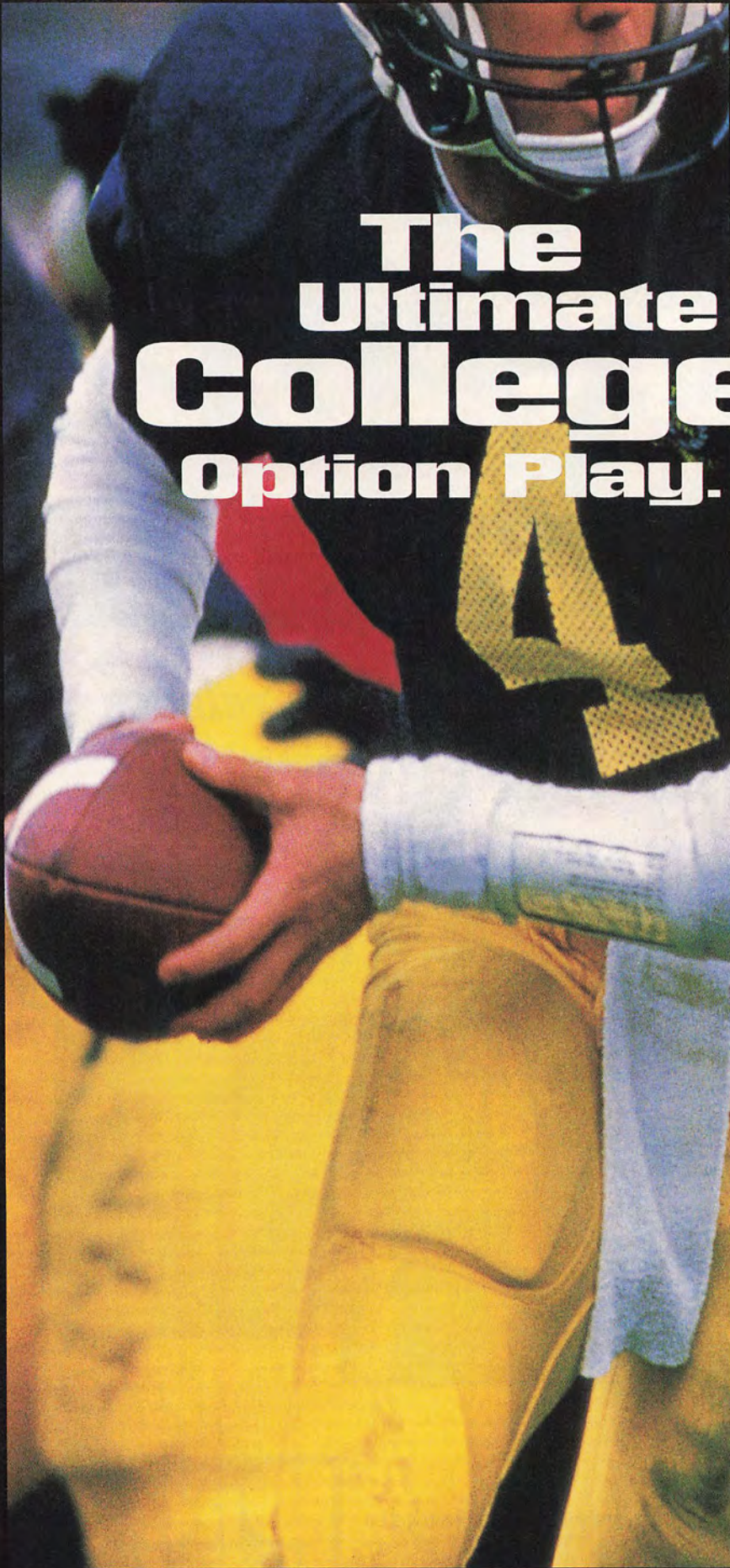


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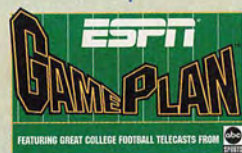




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# Scorecard

AUGUST 26,  
1996

EDITED BY MICHAEL BAMBERGER AND RICHARD O'BRIEN



JOHN KUNTZ/REUTERS

## The Games (cont.)

The Paralympics began, as did the Summer Games themselves, at Olympic Stadium in Atlanta, with a lone athlete standing beneath an unlighted cauldron. Muhammad Ali was not in the house last Thursday, but 64,500 other people were, including Mark Wellman, a 36-year-old American mountain climber who is paralyzed from the waist down. This did not prevent him from scaling the 184-foot Olympic

tower hand over hand while carrying the flame between his legs. Moments after Wellman ignited the flame, Christopher Reeve—Superman in the movies, now bound to a wheelchair—officially pronounced the Games open, and 3,500 athletes from 127 nations began 10 days of competition in 19 sports.

Paralympians have cerebral palsy. They are blind. They are missing limbs. They are paraplegics and quadriplegics, high-jumpers and marathoners and shot-putters. They are athletes. On Saturday, 23,729

**World-record holder Frei (1582) and 3,500 other Paralympic athletes kept the Olympic spirit rolling.**

*Paralympics ... Derek Smith Remembered ... Baseball's Most-Talented Traveler ... Search for a Commish ... A Surfing Year ... Rhyming Judge ... John Kruk's 'The Fan'*



## GO FIGURE

2, 1

Players named Tyrone (Malone, Shorter) and Tyron (Wright) released by the San Diego Chargers last Thursday.

15

Course credits that 1969 Heisman Trophy winner Steve Owens, new athletic director at Oklahoma, needs for the college degree he finally plans to get.

5½, 68

Inches shorter and pounds lighter than Peyton, a giraffe born July 27 at the Knoxville Zoo, is than his namesake, 6' 5½", 223-pound Tennessee QB Peyton Manning.

182

Days after surgery to stop bleeding in the brain—caused by an on-ice collision—that NHL forward Tony Granato signed with the San Jose Sharks.

158

Percentage increase announced in the price for a courtside ticket to the U.S. Open from 1996 to '97—raising the cost per seat from \$3,150 to \$8,125.

158

Strokes it took Ivan Lendl to play the first two—his only—rounds at the Czech Open golf tournament in Prague.



spectators watched Heinz Frei of Switzerland set a world record in the wheelchair 10,000 meters. The fans—those who could—stood and clapped. Others pursed their lips and shook their heads, awed by the accomplishments of a fellow man, an athlete.

## A Basketball Life

Derek Smith, the Washington Bullets assistant coach who died of a heart attack on Aug. 9, was 16 when he arrived at the University of Louisville in the fall of 1978. One of six children of Mae Bell Smith Morgan of Hogansville, Ga., he was as raw a freshman as you'll ever see. "When I came to college, I wasn't worried so much about basketball," Smith would later say. "What worried me was whether I was smart enough to compete with the city kids and get a degree. What worried me was how I dressed and how I talked."

After first seeing himself interviewed on TV—"You couldn't understand what I was saying," Smith would recall—he went to Tony Branch, an older teammate, and asked for advice. Branch told Smith to talk more slowly, to think about what he was saying, to stop uttering "you know" in the middle of every sentence. At the risk of exposing himself to further humiliation, Smith became a communications major. By his senior year he had made such strides that he gave the commencement speech at a middle school.

He never had trouble expressing himself on the floor. A 6' 6" swingman, Smith was an essential member of the 1979-80 team that won Louisville's first NCAA title. Although Smith finished as the second-leading scorer in Cardinals history, he was considered an iffy NBA prospect, an evaluation that seemed accurate when Golden State cut him after his rookie season. But then San Diego Clippers coach Jimmy Lynam gave him a tryout. Smith made the cut; in his third season he averaged 22.1 points per game. In August '86 he became the first NBA guard to sign a \$1 million contract.

After knee injuries forced Smith to retire in '90, he

## Leaving His Mark

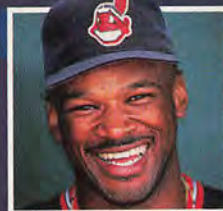
New Mariner Mark Whiten is with his seventh team in six years. Last Friday, in his first Seattle at bat, his game-tying pinch-hit homer helped beat the Yankees. Though Whiten isn't the most garrulous of teammates, it's still somewhat of a mystery why he is so readily disposable. With tape-measure power, basestealing speed and one of the game's best arms, Whiten has provided memorable moments at each of his many whistle-stops.



## BLUE JAYS

July 1990 to June '91

Charges mound after brush-back in May '91 and decks the White Sox' Jack McDowell with right cross. McDowell ineffective versus Toronto ever since.



## INDIANS

June 1991 to March '93

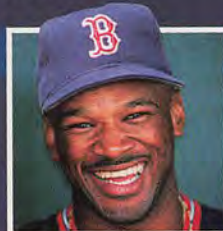
In '92, for second straight season, American League managers choose him as the outfielder with best arm. That same year, he bats .439 in an 11-game hitting streak.



## CARDINALS

March 1993 to April '95

While leading the Cards in homers (25) in '93, ties two major league records with four homers and 12 RBIs in a game against Cincinnati.



## RED SOX

April 1995 to July '95

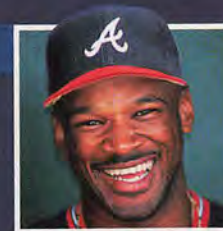
There's that arm again: In April '95 brings Fenway crowd to its feet by doubling Oriole Chris Sabo off first base on a flyball to rightfield.



## PHILLIES

July 1995 to June '96

In his 30th career game at Veterans Stadium, becomes fourth player in history to homer into the upper deck twice, with moon shot versus the Giants.



## BRAVES

June 1996 to August '96

In final at bat, belts three-run pinch homer to ensure 5-2 win over the Phillies and foreshadow his Mariners debut.

returned to Louisville for his degree and wore his uniform under his gown when he graduated in '92. It was no surprise that after Lynam, then with the Bullets, hired Smith in July '94, he became a respected coach.

Smith, 34, embraced life with joy and optimism, a spirit that was snuffed out when he collapsed while on a cruise with his family; his heart attack was triggered by antiseasickness medication. Among those in attendance at his Aug. 15 funeral were Charles Barkley, Rex Chapman, John Starks, most of the Bullets and his Louisville teammates.

"Our hearts are laden with sadness," said his 10-year-old daughter, Sydney. "But only for a time. We know where to find you, and we'll meet you there." Then the little girl in the crisp white dress left the pulpit, having shown the amazing grace and the eloquence that would have made her father's heart swell with pride.

—WILLIAM F. REED



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## PEDALING ART

Head badges, the colorful, ornately designed emblems bicycle companies place on steering columns, have become collectibles. Antique badges fetch as much as \$500.



Pinarello, Italy,  
since 1925



Litespeed, U.S.,  
since 1985



Tommasini, Italy,  
since 1970



Rivendell, U.S.,  
since 1994

## Does It Come in Purple?

According to a Nike media alert, Monica Seles will appear at a "gala event" in New York City on Saturday to unveil a signature tennis shoe, the Air Haze, "named for Seles's love of music from the 1960s." The alert promises that the gala will be "a tie-dyed evening of lovebeats, lava lamps, black-lighting and '60s music." Sounds groovy—and talk about a flashback: Seles was born in 1973.

## Looking for a Landis

Now that baseball's owners and players appear close to settling their contractual squabbles, it's time to think about filling a long-standing vacancy. Baseball has been without a commissioner since the owners fired Fay Vincent in September 1992. Bud Selig, the owner of the Milwaukee Brewers, has been imitating a commissioner, and not too convincingly, ever since.

One thing the next commissioner should *not* be is an owner—or a puppet of the owners. One thing the next commissioner should be is hired jointly by the owners and the players. And the commissioner's power to act independently in the "best interests of the game," a concept weakened since the ouster of Vincent, should be reestablished.

Applicants should send résumés to Selig, in care of Milwaukee County Stadium. In the meantime, we hope the following candidates get consideration.

- Mario Cuomo, former New York governor, one-time minor league centerfielder. Strengths: smart, populist, has convictions, loves the game. Weakness: suffers fools poorly.
- Len Coleman, National League president. Strengths: Reasonable, fair, liked by owners and players. Weakness: liked by owners.
- Billy Payne, chairman, Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games. Strengths: master salesman, comfortable with TV execs and corporate chiefs, sympathetic to spectators. Weakness: tells whoppers.
- Jim Bunning, Hall of Famer, U.S. representative from Kentucky. Strengths: keen sense of baseball and politics. Weakness: occasionally inflexible.
- Doris Kearns Goodwin, historian, baseball fan. Strengths: intelligent, has enthusiasm for the sport, would be first member of the stronger sex to serve as commissioner. Weakness: baseball experience limited to appearances in Ken Burns's PBS series.

## Poetic Justice

Faced with an obtuse case in which some Passaic County (N.J.) tavern owners were charged with showing a pirated closed-circuit telecast of the 1995 Larry Holmes–Oliver McCall fight, U.S. district judge Nicholas Politan borrowed a leaf from Muhammad Ali's book. He put a poetic punch in the proceedings last week when he issued a four-page ruling, denying a defense motion to dismiss the case,



## SCOUTING REPORT

### Stoked!

Caught Inside: A Surfer's Year on the California Coast, by Daniel Duane (North Point Press, \$21)

The idea is refreshing: drop out for a year, live beachside, surf daily. That's what Daniel Duane does in this, his second book. Duane, although not yet 30 and wholly at ease with the word *stoked*, follows in the tradition of Thoreau. He is a naturalist, a historian, a ponderer. The Pacific—in its chilly zone, in the vicinity of Santa Cruz—is his Walden Pond.

Big-wave, cold-water surfing is an act of courage, and so is writing a 239-page surfing book without photographs, as Duane has done. His book is a report on what he learned in his waterlogged year. Between swells, we learn about surfing literature,

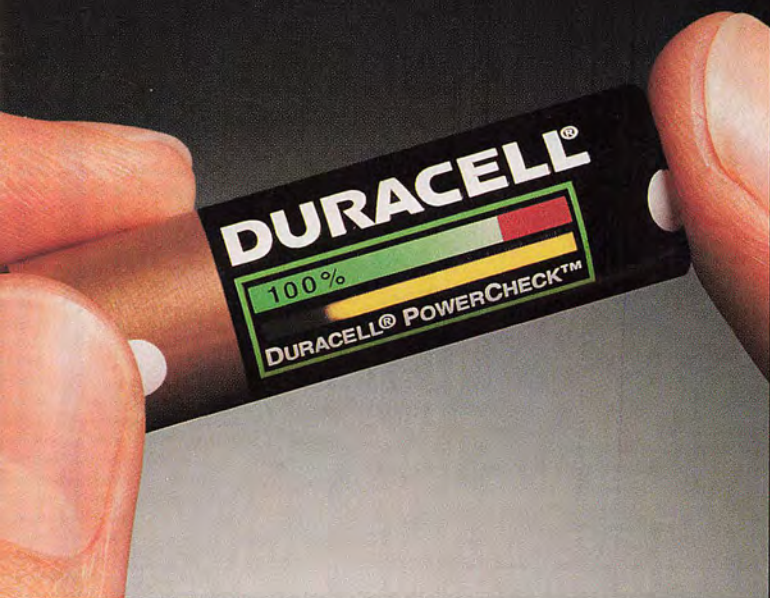
movies and etiquette. We learn about surfers being attacked by sharks, monster waves, one another. We learn about surf, about the physical properties of a wave. "Until somebody figures out how to ride sound or light, surfing will remain the only way to ride energy," Duane writes, and in a single sentence he reveals the allure of the sport for even the most sedentary among us.

He doesn't write about how to surf. Duane, a child of the skateboarding culture, seems to have known how to do that going in, which is a shame. *Caught Inside* needs a journey, a start in one place, a finish someplace else. It aches for some sense of the development of its protagonist. "I called my uncle on the phone," Duane writes, "told him that theory of mine about surfing not being a story." But of course there's a story. There's always a story. Unfortunately, Duane only outlines his. He brushes at characters—a sporadic girlfriend who is indifferent to tides, a college teacher who surfs when he should be handing out exams, a lawyer's son afraid of life on the sandy side of the sandbar. They sound compelling, but who are they? Duane, for all his fearlessness, never jumps in.

Instead, he has written a long, thoughtful, uncommon essay—a tribute to the Pacific's green ceiling and the birds above it, the dolphins below it and the surfers upon it.—M.B.



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## This Week's Sign That the Apocalypse Is Upon Us

A man who was expelled in 1990 from the Fort Washington Golf and Country Club in Fresno, Calif., for swearing dropped a breach-of-contract suit against the club when it agreed to pay him \$75,000.

## They Said It

**Larry Poncino**  
National League umpire, upon ejecting often petulant Cincinnati Red Kevin Mitchell from an Aug. 14 game: "Go to your room!"

written entirely in rhyme. "We had to do something to entertain ourselves," says Politan, who, with the help of clerks, spent two months crafting his verse, complete with footnotes. Insists Politan, "The legal basis is absolutely sound."

Which is more than can be said for the meter. Still, when grappling with matters of evidentiary admissibility, it's refreshing to encounter such passages as "The Court is not satisfied that perfidious antics/(Rhyme is not easy—excuse the semantics)/Are afoot and affecting the within litigation—/Not the most monumental in the courts of the nation."

Politan, who's considering drafting future opinions in Latin verse, says he's no boxing fan. That much should be clear from the ruling's fifth stanza: "The bout was between Messrs. Holmes and McCall/Whose pugilistic talents are well-known to all./The match evoked international attention/But the outcome herein shall go without mention."

## Intercepted

Denver's KOA radio has been auditioning candidates to be the color commentator for its Broncos broadcasts, and former NFL safety Michael Harden was eager for the job. His debut at the Aug. 10 Broncos versus Carolina Panthers game went well, but when Harden stepped from the booth at Mile High Stadium, he was promptly handcuffed by police. It seems Denver's finest had been searching for Harden since his girlfriend filed a domestic violence complaint against him last month. "Somebody heard him on the radio," says police spokesman John Wyckoff, "and we all of a sudden realized where he was."

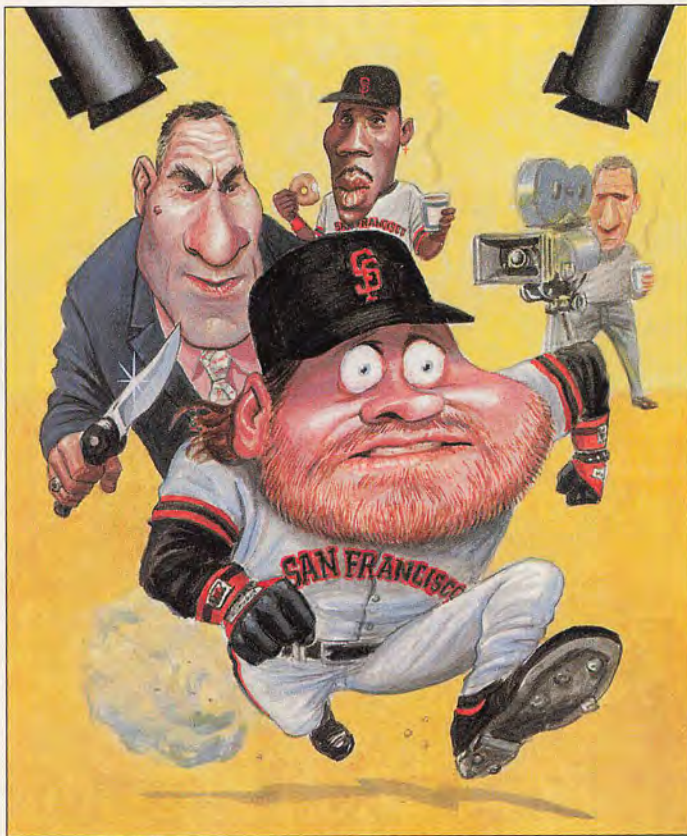
Harden, who retired in 1990, spent a night in jail before posting \$550 bail. Not surprisingly, he was unavailable for comment . . . or commentary.

## John Kruk: At the Movies

Phoef Sutton's script for *The Fan* included a role to be played by a "John Kruk look-alike." The producers, aware of the former big leaguer's profane glibness around the batting cage and his entertaining appearances on David Letterman's show, decided to hire the lumpish, bestubbed Kruk himself. In *The Fan*, which opened Friday, Robert De Niro plays an obsessive knife salesman—baseball fan and Wesley Snipes a Barry Bonds-esque ballplayer who is the object of De Niro's obsession. Kruk, who retired in 1995 with a .300 batting average after 10

seasons, spent four months in California playing one of Snipes's teammates. "We were on the set about 13 hours a day, and I must have slept eight of 'em," says Kruk. That left him five hours a day to gather impressions. And we wondered. . . .

Who is more frightening, De Niro or Randy Johnson, the Seattle Mariners' fireballer whose fastball came famously close to Kruk's head in the 1993 All-Star Game? "De Niro, by far," says Kruk. "He had a knife. In one scene he goes after me, and I was like, What the f---! I thought he was serious. I mean, he goes nuts."



JEFF WONG

Movie newcomer Kruk found the madness in De Niro's Method terrifying.

Could the ballplaying actors play ball? "Snipes wasn't bad for how little he'd played, but I wouldn't tell my pitcher to walk him."

How were the fringe benefits? "They only let us drink fake beer, which was horrible. Snipes had someone sneak me in a 12-pack of real Budweiser."

What gets left on the cutting room floor? "I haven't seen the movie yet, but I heard they cut some of the scenes with me cursing. Those are the scenes I like best."

How faithful was celluloid baseball to real baseball? "Well, in the movie we play in a rainstorm that's like a typhoon. No real game would go on in that kind of rain and mud. And they also put books in the dugout. I tried to tell 'em, you don't get a whole lot of books in big league dugouts."

How much money did he make? "Not as much as De Niro or Snipes—or the caterer."



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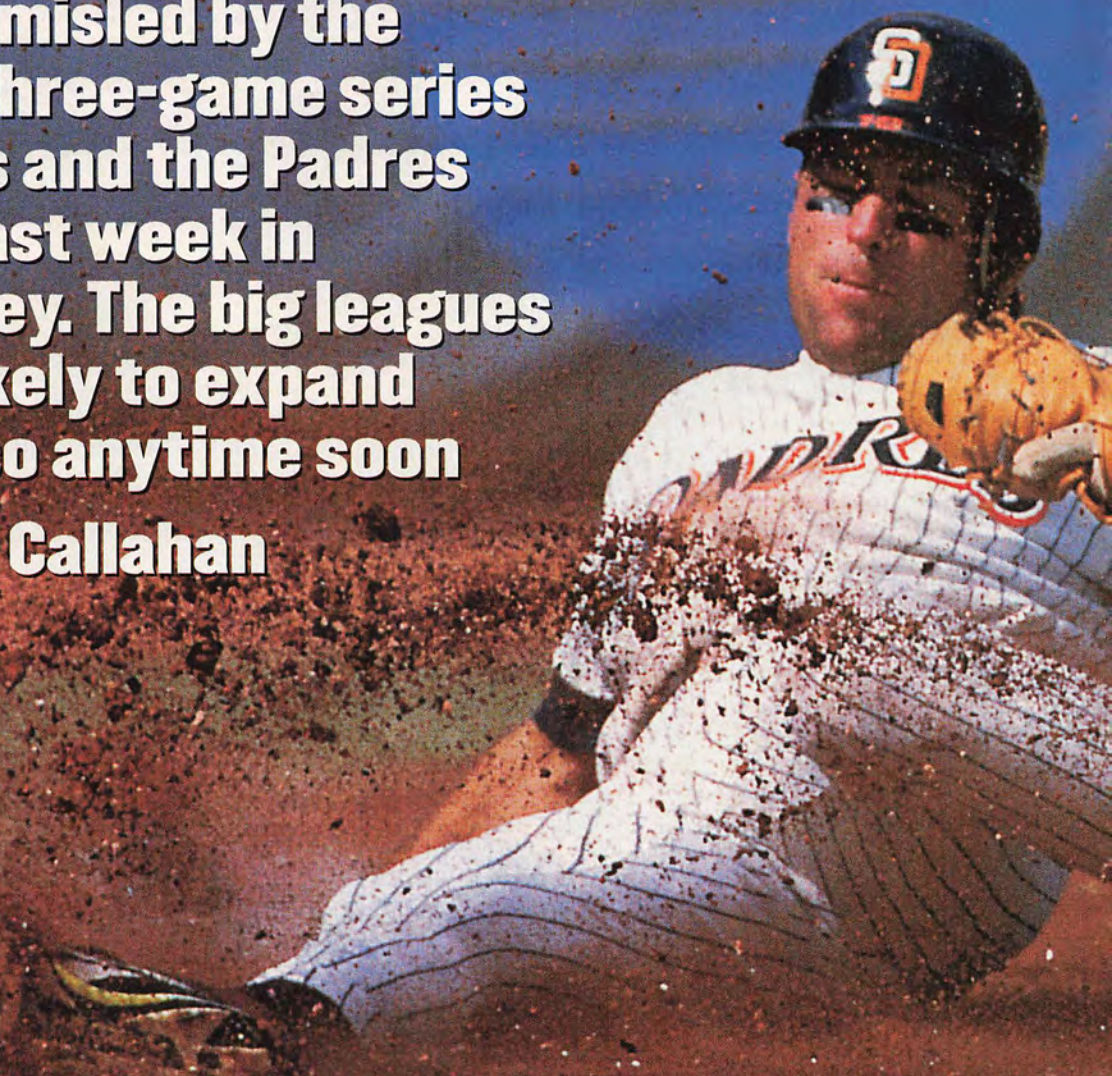
DAILY TRANSIT

HEFTY, BOUND SEAMS



# **¡Oleé!** **(NO WAY)**

**Don't be misled by the festive three-game series the Mets and the Padres played last week in Monterrey. The big leagues aren't likely to expand to Mexico anytime soon**  
**by Gerry Callahan**





**Sports  
Illustrated**

San Diego was the "home" team, but Craig Shipley was out at the plate in Sunday's finale.





FROM A commissioner's office in New York or a press box almost anywhere in the U.S., the view was breathtaking. With a population of 2.5 million and a rich baseball tradition, the sprawling city of Monterrey, Mexico, appeared to be the ideal market for major league baseball to enter as it moved into the next millennium.

The San Diego Padres, bumped from Jack Murphy Stadium because of a potential scheduling conflict with last week's Republican National Convention, chose to play last weekend's three-game series against the New York Mets in the 25,644-seat Estadio de Beisbol Monterrey, which thus became the site of the first big league games played outside the U.S. and Canada. For the Padres the series was merely a chance to make the best of the scheduling snafu and increase their burgeoning fan base south of the border. But for major league baseball the series was much more. It was an opportunity to show the world that the grand old game could think globally and act progressively. It was the first step toward Monterrey's getting an expansion franchise perhaps as early as the turn of the century.

Funny thing is, virtually all of the people envisioning what a great addition Monterrey would be to the major leagues had one thing in common: They weren't in Monterrey last weekend. To those who made the trip and saw the games, the prospect of a big league baseball team's being based in Monterrey looked like a distant dream, not unlike the possibility of Mrs. Fields opening a cookie store on Neptune. It may happen by the turn of the century, but we're not talking about the next century.

At this point Monterrey has a better chance of landing the Winter Olympics than a major league baseball franchise. Aside from the oppressive heat, the language barrier, the lack of an adequate stadium and the depressed economy, there's almost nothing to stop the big leagues from dropping a team there. Monterrey might be more useful as a Triple A affiliate. Then, at least, a major league manager could threaten his players with a demotion there.

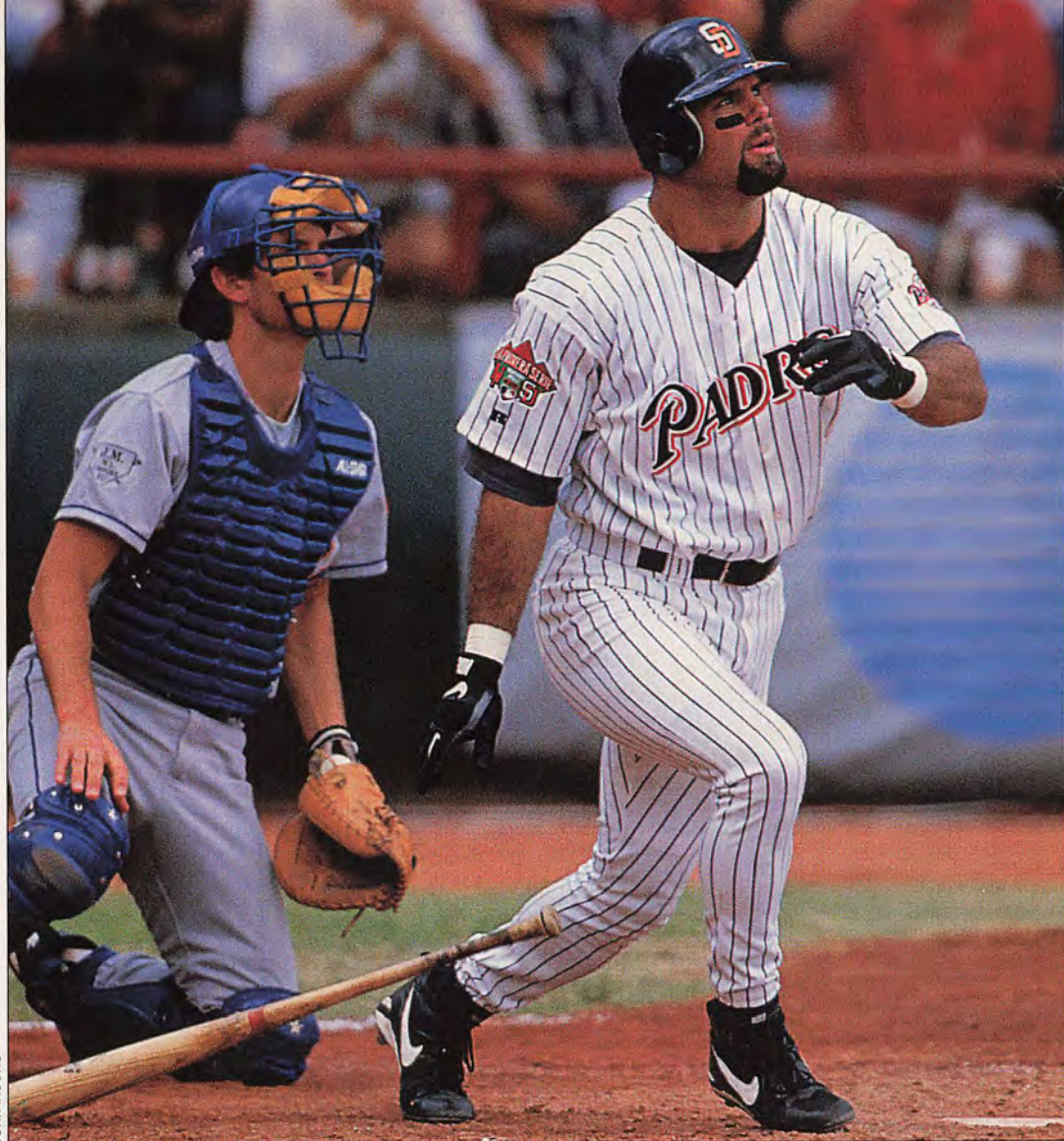
Among other things, it is impossible to imagine an American-born, English-speaking free agent choosing to play in Monterrey. "Right now, I can't see it," said Padres rightfielder Tony Gwynn before Friday's game. "When you reach the major leagues, you want to feel like a major league ballplayer. You want to play in a major league ballpark in a major league city. This just doesn't feel like that."

Monterrey is a picturesque city that loves its baseball—it's the home of the Mexican Baseball Hall of Fame—but it takes more than that to land a big league franchise. It takes piles of money. The newest expansion teams, the Arizona Diamondbacks and the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, which make their debuts in 1998, paid \$130 million apiece just to take a seat at the major league table. And that sum didn't include the cost of a new stadium or the payroll or the price of paper clips. You don't need Lou Dobbs to tell you that Monterrey doesn't have that kind of cap-

**Caminiti, whose hitting of late has been as hot as Mexican cooking, cranked out two Sunday homers.**

ital. In fact, when major league baseball was last accepting applications from possible expansion franchises, in 1994, a group from Monterrey applied. Unfortunately, the Mexican economy slumped while the applications were being processed, and José Maíz, the man in charge of Monterrey's bid, wrote a letter to the expansion committee bowing out because of a lack of funds. "We need to let the economy recover," wrote Maíz, a construction mogul who also owns the Sultanes, the local Mexican League entry. "We are not ready yet."

Rodolfo Sánchez, a salesman for a steel company, attended last Friday's Mets-Padres game with his wife, father and brother, laying out 300 pesos (\$40) for four seats. Sánchez also took in the Dallas Cowboys-Kansas City Chiefs preseason game at an adjacent stadium on Aug. 5, and



JOHN IACONO



he found the baseball game more entertaining. "The football players were just trying to not break their legs," he said as he watched last Friday's game. "The baseball players are giving everything they've got."

Did Sánchez believe the Padres' visit portended well for his hometown's chances of landing an expansion team? "Oh, no," he said. "But it lifts us up just a little, and so it was worth it."

Gene Orza, the associate general counsel of the players' association and a proponent of taking the game international, says expansion to Monterrey is "inevitable." Then he adds, "Of course they would have to build a dome." A dome? Most of the citizens of Monterrey can't afford tickets. The Sultanes, a Double A caliber team, just won their second straight championship, and they averaged only 6,000 fans per game in Estadio de Beisbol Monterrey. A bleacher seat for a Sultanes game sold for five pesos (67 cents).

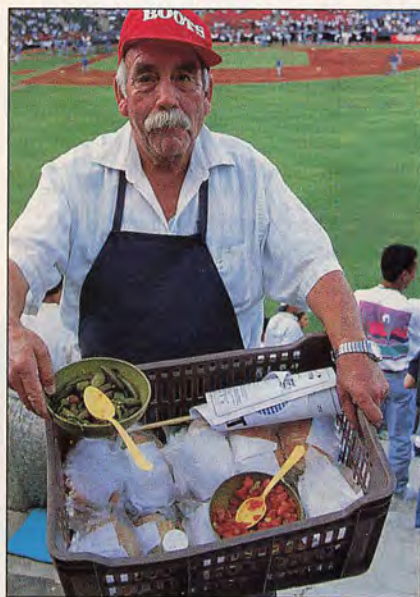
Naturally prices were jacked up for the Mets-Padres series—bleacher seats were 30 pesos (\$4) and the best seats 130 (\$17.34)—but it was a surprise when none of those games were sold out. In the opener last Friday night San Diego pitched Fernando Valenzuela, the most beloved Mexican player of all time, who went six innings to get the win in the Padres' ugly 15-10 victory. The evening was a true, proud Mexican baseball celebration. There were fireworks, mariachi bands and chants of "*¡Toro! ¡Toro!*" for Valenzuela, whose nickname in his home country is the Bull. But there were also nearly 2,000 empty seats. Atten-



ing kills a city's expansion chances quite like a kidnapping.

Before the trip a representative from the commissioner's office visited both teams and warned them not to drink tap water, eat uncooked food or wander into the wrong neighborhood. (However, Todd Hundley and Chris Jones of the Mets became ill during the trip.) The players' association also reminded its members that watching TV in their hotel rooms was not a bad way to spend their time. For many of the players, the three best things about Monterrey were Cinemax, ESPN and HBO.

In hopes of keeping them out of trouble, the hotel treated the players to a free buffet after the night games, which sure was a handy perk. After all, the players were getting only \$300.50 a day for meals, an increase of \$240 from their usual per diem. It was a reward for agreeing to make the



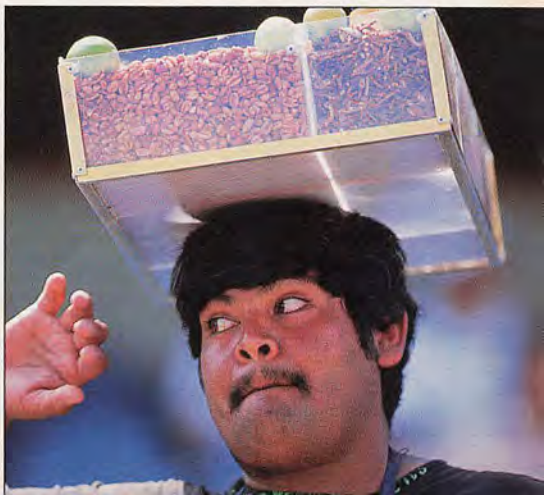
**Baseball, Monterrey-style, offered a taste of Mexico, with clowns (clad as bride and groom) dancing in the aisles and vendors hawking peppers, peanuts and other fare.**

dance slipped to 20,873 for New York's 7-3 win on Saturday night and bounced to 22,810 on Sunday afternoon as the Padres shut out the Mets 8-0.

Gwynn said the highlight of his trip was having the police escort the Padres' bus from the airport to the hotel. The cops continued to guard both teams throughout the series, well aware—as were the players—that there has been a spate of kidnappings of foreigners recently. Monterrey officials wanted to be extra careful; noth-

trip, and in a city of \$3 cheeseburgers and \$7 steaks, the money was enough to feed the entire team for a year. "I don't think we could spend that money if we tried," said Padres second baseman Jody Reed. "I went to a cash machine, and I asked for just \$200 worth of pesos. The money just kept coming and coming. I had this huge wad that I couldn't even fit in my pocket. I had to go to my room to put some away."

Who says the life of a big leaguer is easy? Have you ever tried to stuff 1,500 pesos





## Baseball in Mexico

into your pocket? However, for the Padres, who entered last weekend tied with the Los Angeles Dodgers in the National League West, the trip also posed bigger concerns. They didn't want to blow any games as a result of weird bounces, lost fly balls or any other hazards of playing in an unfamiliar ballpark. And indeed, though the lights in the six-year-old stadium were allegedly upgraded for the series, the park was dim and hazy during the two night games, which made fly balls difficult to pick up. The field looked surprisingly good, but only after a grounds crew imported from San Diego sprayed the bare spots with green paint.

Such conditions would have been enough to prompt many modern ballplayers to scream in protest. Not the Padres. They seemed to handle everything without a hitch or a bitch, and that, they say, is the way they have been all season.

**The Mets lost two of the three games but won over some young fans at an instructional clinic.**

"What's so tough about this? You tell me: Why should we complain?" said San Diego first baseman Wally Joyner on Friday. "We're down here, we're playing baseball. We've got a nice field, a nice stadium. I woke up this morning, and I got ready to play the Mets. That's what I'd be doing no matter where I was."

Even back home the Padres see their share of Mexican fans. After working out the details with the Immigration and Naturalization Service last winter, the team introduced Sunday bus service to bring fans from three Mexican communities to San Diego to watch the Padres. Recently the 100th bus and the 10,000th fan from Mexico arrived at the Murph.

But so far this season San Diego has relied on the oldest marketing tool in the business to draw spectators: a contending team. The Padres are not the most talented or the highest-paid club in the majors, but they have been in first place for most of the season. "I just think everyone in this room has a real desire to win, and we all play together," said San Diego third baseman Ken Caminiti as he scanned the Padres club-

house last Friday night. "For the first month of the season, everyone said we didn't hit enough home runs, but we were in first place. Then we lost 19 out of 23 in June, and we were only two games out when that streak was over. We just find ways to hang in."

Caminiti has no difficulty explaining his most recent hot streak. Through Sunday he had hit nine of the Padres' 20 home runs in August, averaging a homer every 6.3 at bats. The power surge coincided with the arrival of leftfielder Greg Vaughn, who came from the Milwaukee Brewers in a deal for outfielder Marc Newfield and pitchers Bryce Florie and Ron Villone on July 31. San Diego was sorely missing a righthanded muscle man in the middle of the lineup, and at the trading deadline rookie general manager Kevin Towers landed Vaughn, who had belted 31 homers for the Brewers. Although Vaughn was hitting only .135, with four homers, for the Padres through Sunday, he had made his presence felt. "All I know," says Caminiti, who often bats ahead of Vaughn, "is that I've been hitting some bombs since Greg got here."

The Vaughn deal also significantly upgraded the Padres' bench. Former starting leftfielder Rickey Henderson is now a pinch-running and pinch-hitting specialist, a deadly weapon for San Diego if Henderson, a future Hall of Famer, can—or will—accept the new role. "As long as we're winning, I'll do whatever I can to help the team, and I'll deal with it," says Henderson. "Next year is another story. But we're winning ball games, and I want to be a part of it. If we're winning, you won't hear me squawking."

Last Saturday, a local Mexican TV reporter approached Henderson and asked him to read a message in Spanish. Henderson, who doesn't speak Spanish fluently, gladly granted the request and laughed at the suggestion that he might unknowingly be saying something outrageous. What did he care? San Diego was winning.

He was sitting on the bench, on an oven-hot afternoon somewhere in Mexico, and still he wasn't squawking. How do you explain it? For the Padres this season, there just seems to be something in the water. ■



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# Back Again

**Herschel Walker returns to the Dallas Cowboys as a reserve humbled by the many hard hits he has taken**  
**by Skip Bayless**

DALLAS COWBOYS owner Jerry Jones couldn't believe his good fortune. Last month his Cowboys were losing depth as fast as face, and Herschel Walker's agent was calling to say his client would play backup fullback and special teams for the NFL minimum of \$275,000? No signing bonus? No incentive clauses? The same Herschel who made \$2.3 million last season? The same 6' 1", 225-pound, Heisman-winning tailback who was traded in 1989 by Jones and then Dallas coach Jimmy Johnson to the Minnesota Vikings along with four forgettable draft picks for five pretty good players, three first-round picks, three seconds, a third, a sixth and three championships to be celebrated later? The same number 34 who vows he's as fast as ever at age 34? The same Scripture-quoting, poetry-writing, push-up-doing owner of a Dallas private investigation business?

Before re-signing with Dallas, Walker was among the most popular former Cowboys this side of Roger Staubach; in light of the team's recent rash of substance-abuse suspensions and the exploits of the Midnight Cowboy, wide receiver Michael Irvin, he is certainly a refreshing face for Dallas fans. "Herschel is an icon," Jones says. "This was the easiest football decision I've ever made."

After star-crossed stints with the Vikings, the Philadelphia Eagles and the New York Giants, Walker is back with the Cowboys, saying and doing all the right things. As starting fullback in Saturday's 20-3 loss to the Denver Broncos, Walker carried only twice for five yards and made two receptions for 11 yards. Nevertheless, teammates and coaches profess to be amazed by his physical condition, his humility, his ability to catch passes and his willingness to learn five positions (fullback, tight end, nickel tight end, nickel running back and

wide receiver). Walker's constant refrain: "I'm just here to add some depth."

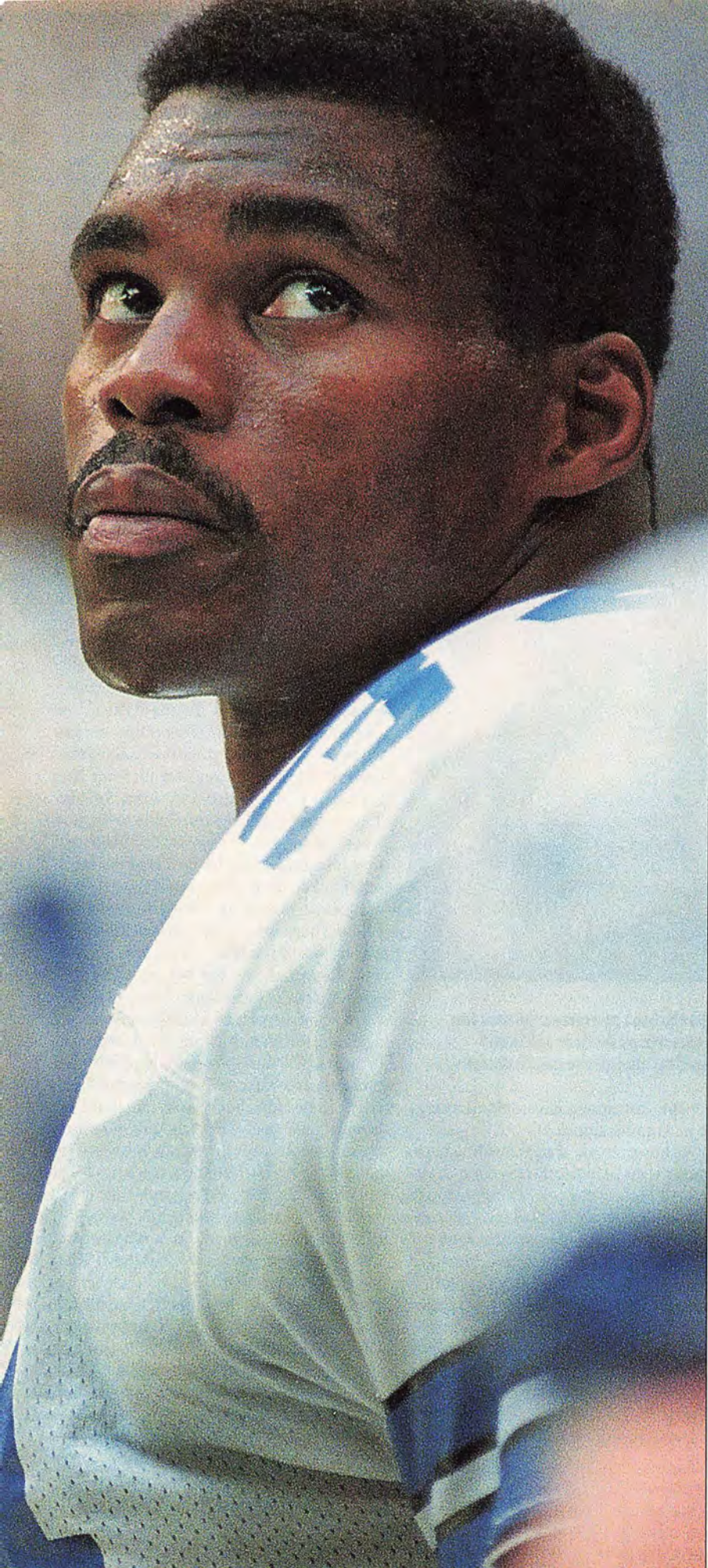
Yet in his rural-Georgia accent, the *p* in "depth" is silent. Eerily, "depth" sounds more like "death."

A case can be made that Walker has added some death at each of his pro football stops. His USFL-leading rushing total of 2,411 yards, with the New Jersey Generals in 1985, remains a single-season pro football record, but it wasn't enough to keep the league from folding. The Cowboys signed Walker after winning the NFC East in '85—and missed the playoffs in each of his three full seasons in Dallas. In Minnesota the Vikings' trade for Walker led to an outbreak of Super Bowl fever. But Minnesota lost in the first round of the '89 playoffs to the San Francisco 49ers 41-13 and then suffered through dissension-racked 6-10 and 8-8 seasons, after which Walker was released. In '92, Philadelphia, picked by many observers to win it all, took a chance on Walker, but the Eagles lost 34-10 in the divisional playoffs to Dallas. Walker was voted Philadelphia's offensive MVP during the 8-8 and 7-9 years that followed, only to be released again. In '95 he signed a three-year, \$4.8 million deal with the Giants. New York went 5-11, and Walker was dumped.

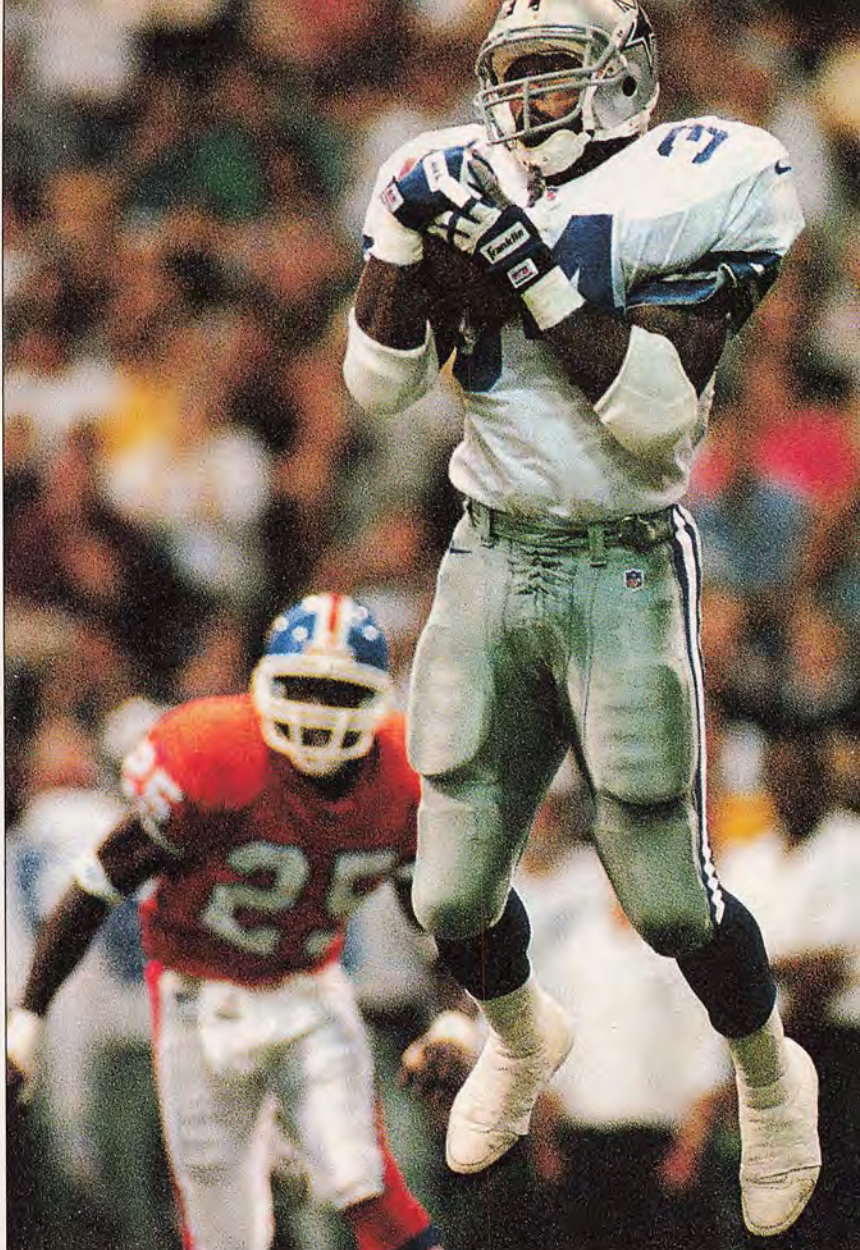
Now some NFL general managers and coaches are hoping that Walker will add some "death" to the Cowboys. Says the player personnel director of one NFC East team, "If he's playing a lot for Dallas, I'll be very happy, because I'll know we have a chance. If they really think he'll block or make plays covering punts, they're kid-

**At age 34, No. 34 has more modest ambitions than he did (from top) in his first Cowboys incarnation and as a Viking, Eagle and Giant.**









ERIC SCHLEGEL

## Herschel Walker

Mark Tuinei remain from that year's team. These Cowboys have been too busy winning Super Bowls to keep up with Walker's also-ran travels. Dallas coaches have been careful not to offend Emmitt Smith by mentioning Walker as even an emergency tailback. Even though Smith suffered a sprained ligament in his left knee against Denver and will be out at least two weeks, Sherman Williams remains the No. 2 tailback; Walker isn't even listed on the depth chart at the position. If Walker truly is tired of being viewed as the Super Bowl key who failed to unlock the door, he has come to the right place. Says Cowboys director of college and pro scouting Larry Lacewell, "The beauty of this situation for Herschel is that in this locker room, he's just another guy. He doesn't have to worry about expectations."

So far, so great. Smith has marveled at Walker's work ethic and skills. Quarterback Troy Aikman told *The Dallas Morning News*, "For a guy of his stature to be the way he is, it gives the NFL a good name."

Others say they've seen this act before. Former Dallas cornerback Everson Walls recalls the two seasons during which Walker shared backfield duties with Tony Dorsett. Walls says Walker was fine, except when Dorsett was getting the bulk of the carries. "Herschel was great at telling the media in that country-boy accent of his, 'Gee, I don't call the plays. I can't figure out what's going on,'" says Walls. "And the fans just jumped on his bandwagon. Herschel talked Tony right out of town."

Dorsett, arguably the Cowboys' best running back until Smith arrived in Dallas, was traded to the Broncos in 1988. "Going with Herschel was the beginning of the end for [coach] Tom Landry," says Walls. "It wasn't that anyone had anything personal against Herschel, but our chemistry was broken up." And that was only part of the problem, according to Walls. "We could see right away Herschel wasn't that fluid or nimble," he says. "He couldn't turn the corner on sweeps or swing passes. He couldn't dictate the game the way Tony did or Emmitt does. He was more like a big brute who could run like hell if he got through a hole. I guess he could just run over guys in college football or the USFL, but this was the NFL."

Publicly, Landry tried to sell the concept of a dream backfield of Heisman winners Dorsett and Walker. Privately, he told his coaches, "Let's try to figure out what to do with Herschel." A shoulder injury from his college days seemed to make Walker tentative on plunges. He ran robotically up-

ding themselves. And if he isn't playing much, it will be interesting to see if he keeps his mouth shut. This guy is one of the great manipulators of the media. He's never been nearly the player a lot of people think he is."

More precisely, Walker has become a victim of superhuman expectations he helped create. Beginning during his college days at Georgia, he turned himself into almost a cartoon superhero: a world-class sprinter who had a black belt, performed in a ballet, made the Olympic bobsled team, chased criminals and even scored touchdowns in his spare time. While the Herschel myth has helped make Walker wealthy, it has frustrated coaches who overestimated Walker's football drive and natural ability. It has also alienated teammates who believe he is more interested in befriending owners,

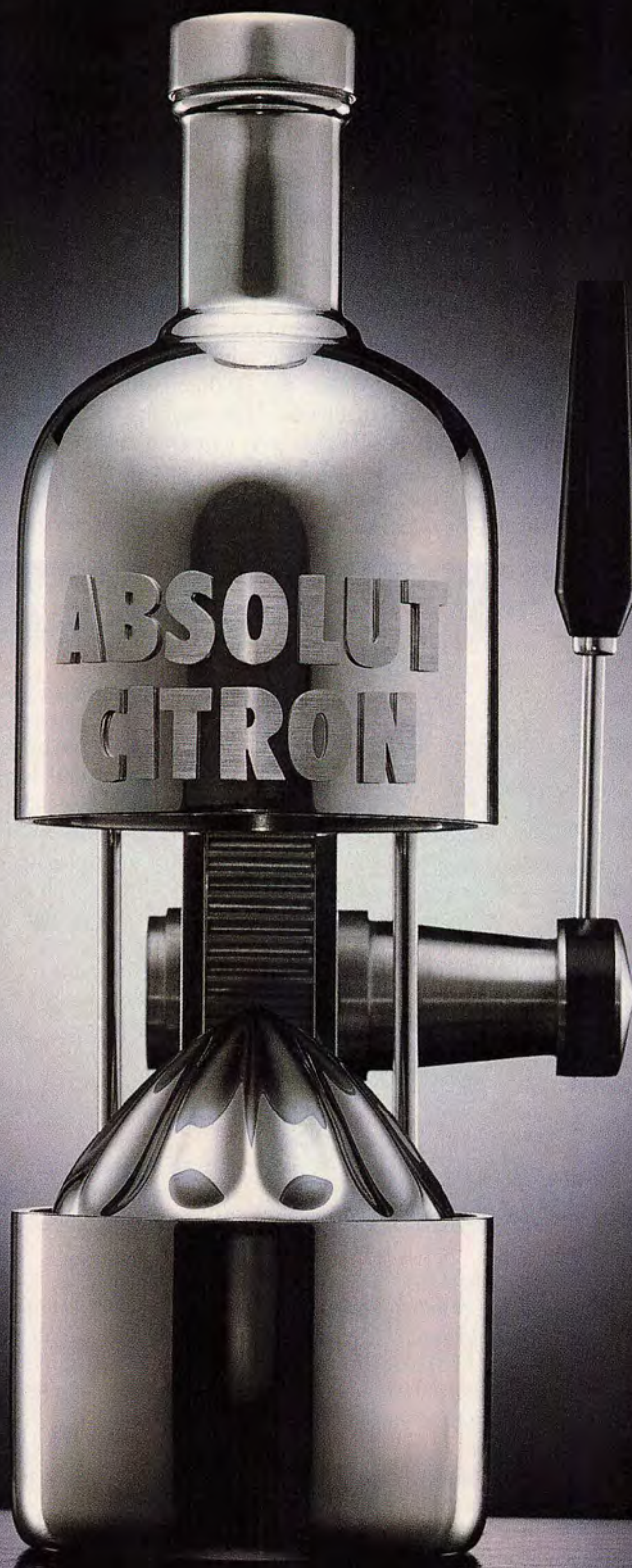
### Walker's past coaches say that his shortcomings include his habit of leaving his feet to catch passes.

enhancing his image and making money than in winning games.

Now, however, he appears willing to do whatever it takes to finally play for a champion. "All the adversity I've been through has built a lot of character in me," he says. "Now I just want to be part of a winner." Says Jones, "I know for a fact Herschel could have made more money from other teams, but he simply wants to win a Super Bowl ring."

Few current Cowboys have a sense of the jealousy and bitterness that Walker engendered among veterans when he arrived in Dallas in 1986. Only safety Bill Bates and offensive linemen Nate Newton and





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## Herschel Walker

right and reduced his gait to choppy steps if he sensed any traffic in the hole. "Tiptoeing," the players call it. Tiptoeing.

Paul Hackett, now offensive coordinator for the Kansas City Chiefs, served as the Cowboys' pass-offense coordinator during Walker's three full seasons in Dallas. After the Cowboys' 3-13 showing in 1988, a frustrated Hackett said, "Herschel is an immense talent with dramatic speed. But what people don't understand is that though he's supposed to be a big power runner, he's best at running and catching out in space. The question is, How do you get him there? We were statistically successful with him [in '88 he became the 10th player in NFL his-

tory to amass more than 2,000 combined yards rushing and receiving in a season] by lining him up in lots of different places. But we never felt he was completely committed to winning. Every year it's: 'Well, I may want to join the FBI.' You wonder how much football really means to him."

Walls agrees. "You want to know that the guy beside you will put it on the line," he says. "You never were sure about Herschel." Walls and other players were also skeptical about the number of push-ups and sit-ups Walker says he does every day. "We heard that he did 1,000 push-ups and 2,500 sit-ups [Walker says he now does 750 and 2,000], and that he ate just one meal a day. We'd kid him about it. We'd say, 'Herschel, you have little kids all over America

trying to be like you by starving themselves and tearing up their pecs doing millions of push-ups.' He'd just smile and say, 'Hey, it pays the bills.' We'd see him sneaking hamburgers into the dorm late at night. We knew it was an exaggeration, and he knew it. But he's got a mystique."

After taking over as coach in 1989, Johnson saw that the emperor wasn't wearing many clothes. Apparently, Vikings president Mike Lynn was still blinded by Walker's speed, stats and status as a Pro Bowl player in 1987 and '88. While Johnson immediately called the October '89 trade "the great train robbery" in Dallas's favor, Minnesota fans saw it as a plane ride to the Super Bowl for the Vikings. "The mood was festive," recalls *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*



SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS president Carmen Policy could have been talking for the entire league last week when he spoke of the Dallas Cowboys' newly announced, eight-year, \$42.5 million contract with running back Emmitt Smith: "To tie up so much capital in this player and two or three others is a terrible risk. The long-term question is, Will they be able to field a competitive team down the road because of these signings?"

The Smith deal—combined with several others, notably the monster contracts given over the last three years to quarterback Troy Aikman (eight years, \$47 million) and defensive back-wide receiver Deion Sanders (five years, \$25 million)—means that the Cowboys have locked up their top players through their primes. For the rest of the 1990s Dallas will have intact the best eight- or 10-player nucleus in recent NFL history.

But signing stars to megadeals has a flip side: A team doesn't have much left to spend, so it has to rely on low-priced talent at numerous positions. SI estimates that this season Dallas will have a league-high 27 of its 53 players at or below the NFL minimum salary for veterans of five or more years, \$275,000. Soon the Cowboys may have to do even more of their shopping in the discount bin: The combined cap values of Smith, Aikman and Sanders will rise from \$11.56 million this season to \$22.5 million in 1999.

## BETTING THE RANCH

"We're in a very risky, dicey business," Dallas owner Jerry Jones says. "I've seen more people in my life go broke by being conservative than by being risky. Having said that, because I'm in the game for the long term, it'd be out of character for me to be such a Mississippi riverboat gambler that five or six years down the road I've made it impossible for us to win."

Jones continues to defy the capologists who said he wouldn't be able to please all his stars. Not only has he given big deals to Aikman, Sanders and Smith, but he has also locked up wideout Michael Irvin (five years, \$14.5 million) and defensive stalwarts Charles Haley (four years, \$12 million), Kevin Smith (four years, \$11 million), Tony Tolbert (five years, \$14.1 million) and Darren Woodson (six years, \$18 million). He has done it by giving players huge signing bonuses—\$13 million to Sanders, \$10.5 million to Emmitt Smith, to cite the two biggest—and, for salary-cap purposes, prorating the bonuses over the life of long contracts. In the

**Smith's injury on Saturday put a scare in the already depleted Cowboys.**

first three seasons of his deal, Smith will cost the Cowboys a very manageable \$4 million, \$2.5 million and \$3 million against the cap, but his price tag swells

to \$7.35 million, \$7.5 million and \$7 million in 2001, 2002 and 2003. Jones may be counting on the current \$40.75-million-per-team cap level to jump significantly after the next TV contracts are negotiated. (The current pacts expire after the 1997 season.)

A relaxed Emmitt Smith sat in his dorm room at the Cowboys' training camp in Austin last week and reveled in his new fortune. "I didn't break the bank, but I got a pretty good piece of it," he said. "Jerry did just what he said he'd do, and I'm grateful." Smith knows Dallas has sacrificed depth to pay him and the Cowboys' other stars. That weakness has been exposed by a litany of injuries that has caused Dallas, after beginning the exhibition schedule with a one-point defeat of the Oakland Raiders, to look dreadful in losing preseason games by a combined score of 83-16 to the Kansas City Chiefs, the New England Patriots and the Denver Broncos. In last Saturday night's 20-3 loss to Denver, the first-string offense made only two first downs and one field goal in six Aikman-led drives. "We have a very slim margin for error. Very slim," said Smith, who limped off in the second quarter with a sprained medial collateral ligament of the left knee that will sideline him for at least two weeks. "We can't afford to be hurt. We're at the point where, after our first string, we might be in trouble."

—PETER KING

ERIC SCHLEGEL



the year:

2020

the event:

# SPINNING HURDLES

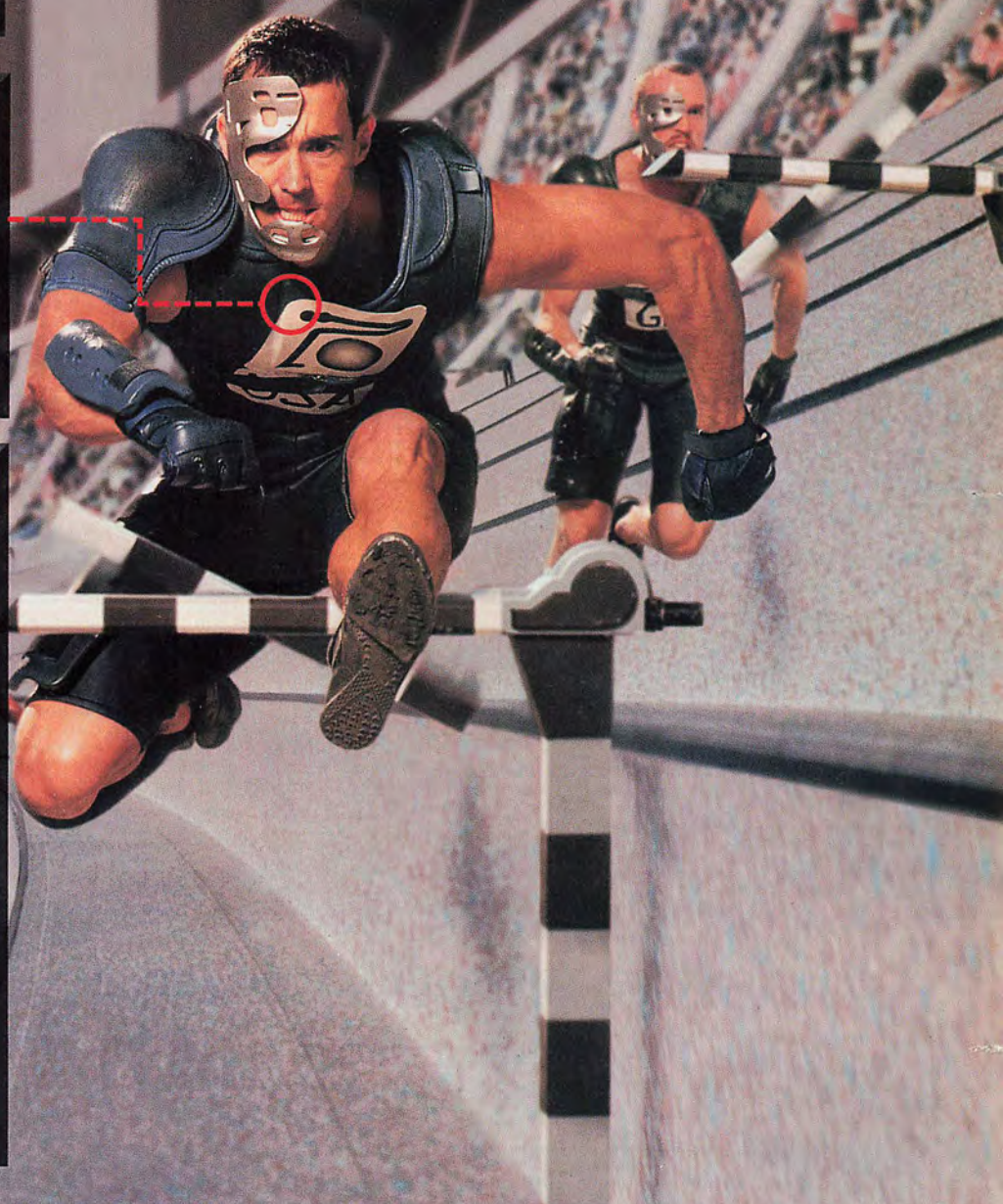
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## Herschel Walker

columnist Dan Barreiro. "One of the first times Herschel touched the ball, he lost his shoe and still went 50 or 60 yards. That cinched it. Here was the mythical figure who would lead them to the Super Bowl."

Minnesota coaches, however, slowly realized that Walker wasn't a back who could wear down a defense by carrying 30 times a game. He ran hard on some plays, halfheartedly on others. Lynn was blamed for trading so much for so little. Says Walker, "I became the bad guy." Yet it wasn't *his* fault that Lynn made one of the worst trades in sports history. Dallas got Issiac Holt, David Howard, Darrin Nelson, Jesse Solomon and Alex Stewart, but more important, with their slew of draft picks the Cowboys eventually selected Smith, defensive tackle Russell Maryland and defensive backs Kevin Smith and Darren Woodson.

An incident following the 1990 season further clouded Walker's image. According to Walker, he was sitting in his car with the engine running and the garage door closed early one Sunday morning at his suburban Dallas home when he accidentally fell asleep while listening to a favorite song. He was saved, he says, by the barking of his rottweiler, Al Capone, who awoke Walker's wife, Cindy. Walker was treated for carbon monoxide poisoning. "Suicide?" Walker says to the inevitable speculation. "Anyone who knows Herschel knows Herschel would never do anything like that."

In 1992 the Eagles signed Walker, hoping he would be the final ingredient they needed to reach the Super Bowl. "But there was a real split among the players," says Ray Didinger, former pro football columnist for the *Philadelphia Daily News*. "Buddy Ryan [who had been fired as coach following the 1990 season] had convinced a lot of them that Herschel was a loser, a

quitter. Buddy preached that if the game was close and you hit the guy hard enough, he would cough it up." Sure enough, as a Viking, Walker had made costly fumbles in games against Philadelphia in '89 and '90, and the Eagles won both games. "Herschel did not walk into a locker room that welcomed him with open arms," says Didinger. In three seasons Walker did everything but help Philadelphia win lots of games. In '94 he became the first player in NFL history to have gains of 90 or more yards rushing, receiving and kick-returning in a single season. Yet Walker accomplished that feat against three opponents who ended up with a combined record of 19-29. The Eagles lost all three games.

When new coach Ray Rhodes arrived before the 1995 season and signed free agent

Ricky Watters of the 49ers, Walker again was out of a job. But not for long. The Giants snatched him up to replace third-down back Dave Meggett, who had signed as a free agent with the New England Patriots. New York coach Dan Reeves soon discovered, however, that Walker wasn't cut out for the role. "He didn't have the ability because he couldn't beat people one-on-one," Reeves says. "He's not an elusive guy. He can catch the ball, but he's constantly off the ground when he does. Then when he comes down he has to gather himself before he gets going again. We also wanted him to be a fullback, but he wasn't that strong of a blocker." Walker played sparingly during the second half of the season, the Giants' worst since 1983. Though he claims he pays no attention to

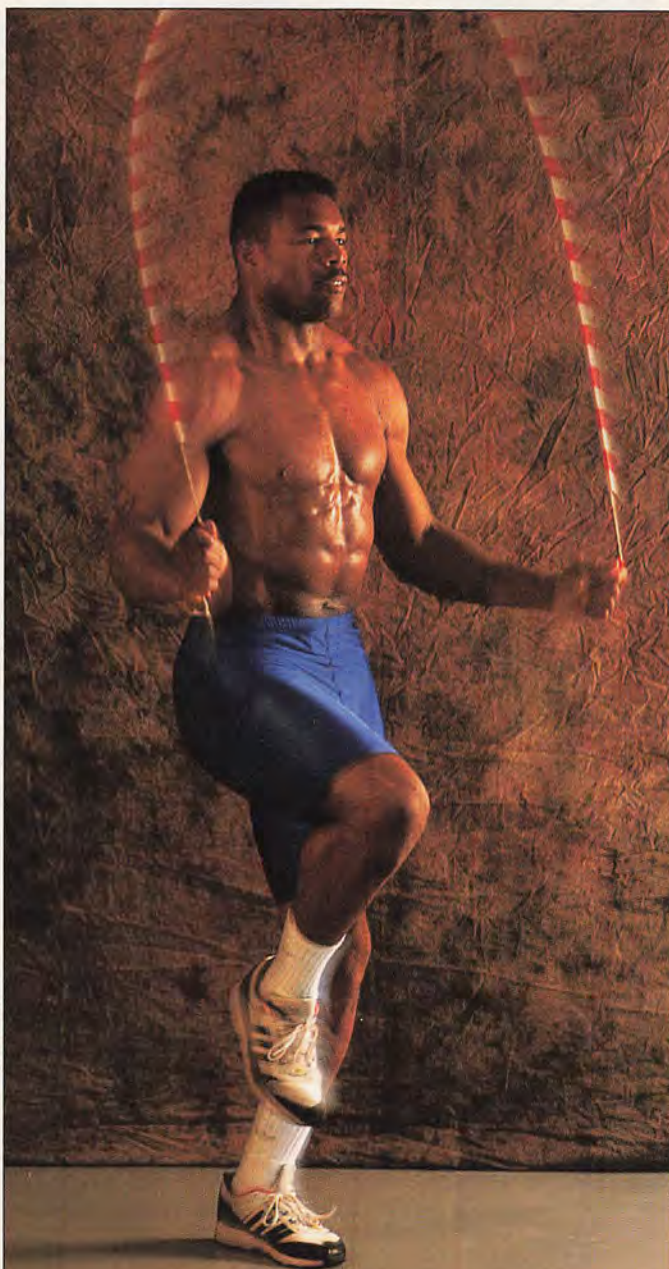
his statistics, he says, "I needed something like nine catches [actually, nine] to reach 500. We were out of the play-off race. That would have been good for the team [to let me go for 500]."

Same old Herschel. His statements are a wacky maze of contradictions. He says Dallas pursued him; Jones says Walker's agent called the Cowboys. Walker says the 49ers also pursued him; San Francisco officials say they were never interested. Walker offered his services to Dallas as a backup fullback yet says he's too small to play fullback. Huh?

Now, with Irvin suspended for the first five games because of violations of the league's substance-abuse policy, Smith out and tight ends Jay Novacek (back) and Eric Bjornson (hamstring) sidelined indefinitely, Walker becomes more of a necessity than a luxury for Dallas. "It's a real blessing to have him, with all the injuries we've had," Aikman said last week.

Will Jones curse the day he brought back the player he traded for the foundation of his Team of the '90s? When the Cowboys least expect it, will Walker make waves? For now, he's proving to be a bargain. Says Dallas running backs coach Joe Brodsky, "We are tickled to death."

There's that word again. ■



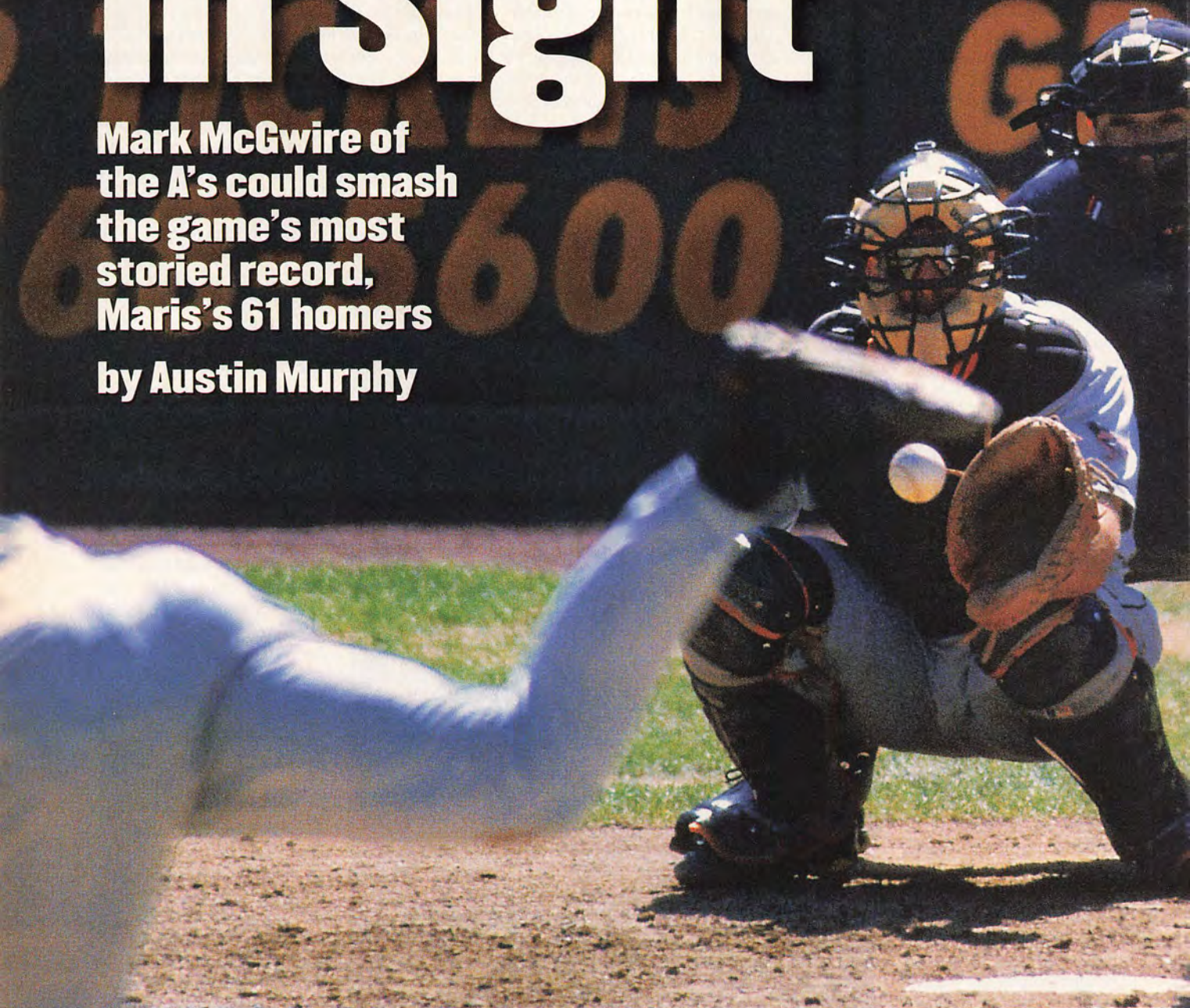
**Walker says he never skips a workout, but teammates claim his famous fitness fetish is exaggerated.**



# In Sight

**Mark McGwire of the A's could smash the game's most storied record, Maris's 61 homers**

**by Austin Murphy**



HE HAS carved most of the fat from his 6' 5", 250-pound frame and all the frills from the most savagely compact swing in baseball. He is divorced and living alone. Oakland A's first baseman and designated hitter Mark McGwire believes in stripping things to their bare essentials.

So successful has McGwire been in streamlining and simplifying his life that,

paradoxically, it is about to be surrounded by chaos. As he heads into September stalking baseball's most renowned single-season record, Roger Maris's mark of 61 home runs, McGwire can expect little peace.

His off-the-end-of-the-bat 400-foot home run against the Baltimore Orioles on Sunday in Oakland increased his season total to 43 and ended a ghastly drought. "Has

gone 13 at bats since his last home run," tut-tutted that day's A's media game notes. When you are averaging a home run every 7.3 at bats, as Big Mac was at week's end, and have averaged a home run every 12.4 at bats during your career to rank second all time (*chart, page 34*), you create certain expectations. What McGwire will be expected to provide during the final month of





**Despite having missed 23 games, McGwire led the majors with 43 home runs at week's end.**

their chiseled slugger. "Nobody misses a McGwire at bat," says Oakland outfielder and McGwire's weightlifting partner, Jason Giambi. "Because you never know how far the ball's going to go."

A's third baseman Scott Brosius calls his decision to leave the dugout for a soda during a McGwire at bat on July 25 against the Toronto Blue Jays "my biggest mistake of the season." By obeying his thirst, Brosius missed seeing Big Mac launch a 488-foot shot into the fifth deck of Toronto's Skydome. That blast, according to estimates provided by a long-distance phone company, was the most titanic in the majors in five years. This same company calculated that, after Sunday's game, McGwire's home runs this season had traveled 17,616 feet.

It was consistent with his refusal to stand transfixed in the batter's box admiring the flight of his home runs that McGwire was embarrassed to learn that someone had actually bothered to calculate the distance his taters had covered. "When I broke in," he said, "they didn't keep track of things the way they do now. These days they have a stat for how many times a guy goes for a cup of coffee."

McGwire broke in nine seasons ago by hitting .289 and cranking out a league-leading 49 homers. He assumed, with the certitude of youth, that things could only get better. They grew steadily worse. Bothered by marital difficulties, he experienced a four-year regression that culminated with his batting .201 with only 22 homers in 1991. In the season's final days Tony La Russa, Oakland's manager at the time, took him out of the lineup so that McGwire's average wouldn't dip below .200.

When Doug Rader joined the A's as a hitting instructor the following season, McGwire was a mess. "There were some very negative feelings about Mark around the league," he recalls. "It was almost as if his manhood was in question. He was very defensive at the plate. He had lost his approach to hitting."

So Rader supplied McGwire with a new approach, teaching him to think during each at bat about "what the pitcher is allowing you to do—walk, hit a single, drive the ball in the

this season is the thrill of the chase.

Let us extrapolate. Should he continue to leave the yard at his current pace, he will finish the season with 59 homers. Thus, despite having already missed 23 games because of injury, he poses a threat to the record Maris set in 1961, when he broke by one Babe Ruth's 34-year-old mark. As the subject of Maris's record arose after Sun-

day's game, McGwire, scowling, stood on a chair with his back to reporters as he rummaged through a cabinet over his locker. "I'm not close to anything," he said. "I don't know what the big deal is."

His teammates know what the big deal is, even if McGwire professes not to. The most exciting thing about these A's, long shots to make the playoffs, are the long shots of

PETER HEAD MILLER



## Mark McGwire

gap or drive it out of the park." If a hitter tries to take more than is being offered, Rader preached, things start to deteriorate.

Rader's influence has been in particular evidence this season in the ironclad discipline Big Mac has shown at the plate. "I'm more impressed with McGwire's discipline than his home runs," says A's manager Art Howe. "He'll take a base on balls instead of making outs on pitches out of the strike zone."

Indeed, in addition to leading the majors in home runs and slugging percentage (.772) at week's end, McGwire was eighth in walks, with 87. When Baltimore ace righthander Mike Mussina was asked re-

cently where he prefers to pitch McGwire, he said, "Low and behind him."

Something else happened in 1992 that boosted McGwire's confidence. He returned to weightlifting, an avocation of which he speaks as if it were a drug. "Weightlifting relieved a lot of the pain I was going through following the '91 season," he says. "When I started to see the changes in my body, it made me feel a lot more positive, more confident in myself."

At least some of those warm feelings have been dampened by persistent speculation that the potpourri of back and foot injuries he has suffered in his career are the result of his being too muscular. From 1993 through '95 McGwire missed 290 games because of injuries. The lower part of McGwire's body, especially his feet, went the thinking, can't support his Herculean upper body.

These days McGwire is healthy and finds himself in pursuit of Maris, whose legacy to baseball is the asterisked home run record, which left Maris embittered. McGwire, too, has ample reason to be bitter. He has spent his career in a stadium that was, until this season, not power-hitter-friendly. (The recently completed wind-blocking monstrosity that is Oakland Colise-

um's centerfield concourse—constructed at the behest of Raiders owner Al Davis—is suspected to be a large reason the A's are on a pace to hit 261 homers this season, which would break the major league record of 240, set by the 1961 Yankees.) Injuries have also cost him.

Has any of this bothered McGwire, kept him awake nights? He smiles. "Maybe in my next life I'll stay healthy and play in Wrigley Field," he says.

Complimented on this excellent attitude, McGwire says, "I'm grounded now."

McGwire credits his eight-year-old son, Matt, with keeping him grounded. Matt, who lives in Southern California with his mother, McGwire's ex-wife, Kathy, had visited his dad a week earlier. "He brought a buddy," said McGwire last Friday. "It was just the three of us the whole weekend. I had the greatest time in the world."

Not only does McGwire "get along great" with Kathy, but he also gets along great with her husband. "He's a great guy," McGwire says. "I hang out with him all the time." An ability to coexist harmoniously with one's former spouse and her new husband would seem to be another sign that one is grounded.

On Sunday, however, McGwire was not grounded. He was up on the chair in his locker, resisting comparisons to Maris. Finally he descended, turned around and relaxed. He recounted some advice he had gotten the day before from Baltimore's Bobby Bonilla: "He told me to enjoy the moment—that millions of people would love to be in this position. So I'll enjoy it."

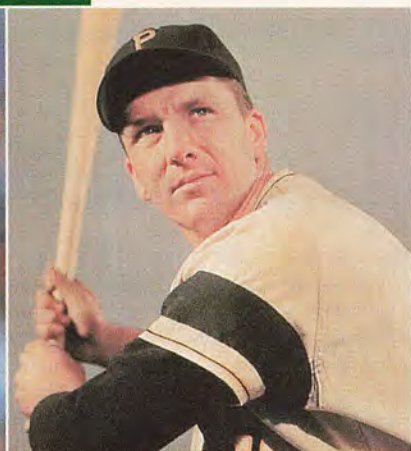
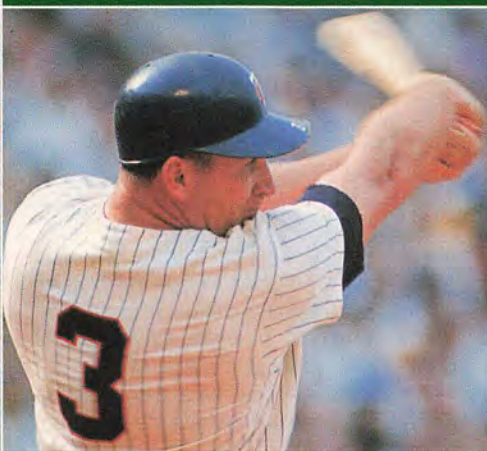
He could not help adding, "But I still don't see what the big deal is."



## TOP FIVE Career Home Run Ratio\*

PLAYER	HR	AB	Ratio
Babe Ruth	714	8,399	11.8
Mark McGwire	320	3,975	12.4
Ralph Kiner	369	5,205	14.1
Albert Belle	233	3,300	14.2
Harmon Killebrew	573	8,147	14.2

\*Min. 2,000 at bats



McGwire is in rare company (clockwise, from top left): Ruth, Kiner, Killebrew, Belle.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: WIDE WORLD PHOTOS; OZZIE SWEET; FRED KAPLAN; TONY TOMSIC





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# Change in the Air

*Proven powers will again prevail,  
but two new superconferences  
and the end of tie games will add  
spice to college football*

**by Tim Layden**





One of the great rivalries that  
will persist unchanged is  
Michigan against Ohio State.





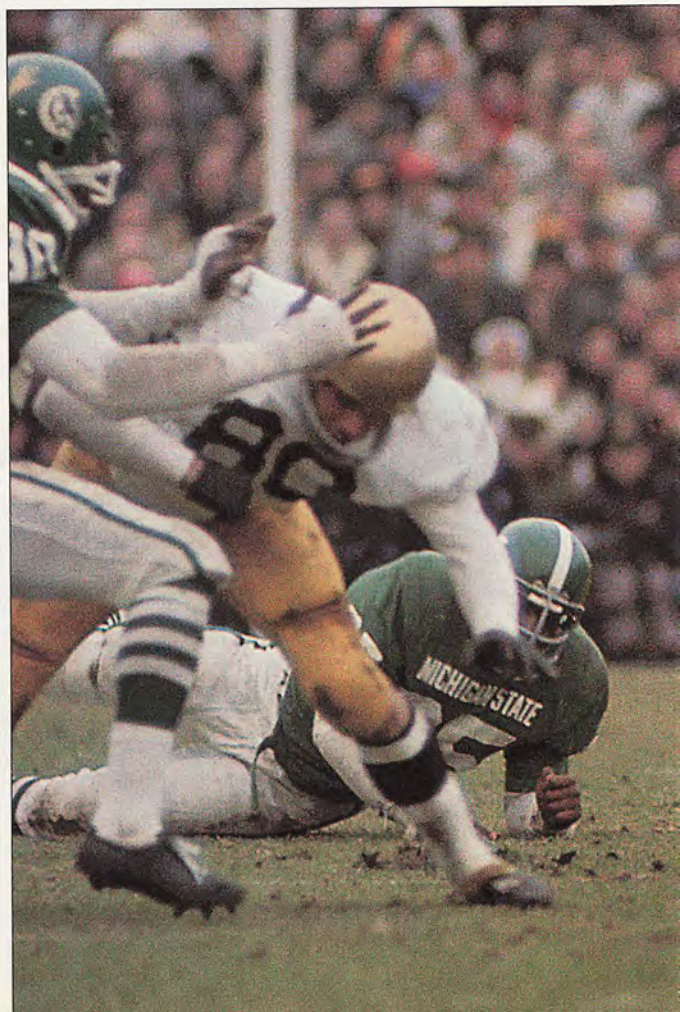
**I**

T'S JAN. 2, 1997. New Orleans. The Superdome falls silent. After almost four hours of play, the Sugar Bowl national-championship game between Tennessee (12-0) and two-time defending national champion Nebraska (12-0) is tied 31-31. They will play the first major bowl overtime in history to decide who wins the title. Team captains gather around a huge corporate logo at midfield, and a coin is tossed into the air. . . .

College football seasons are like class reunions: The faces change, but almost everything else stays the same. Nebraska runs, Florida passes, Notre Dame gets on television a lot. Three controversies arise each season, one pertaining to the Heisman Trophy, one to a spate of early blowouts and one to some perceived injustice done by the polls. The sport is as reliable as the return of autumn itself.

The Heisman debate has begun already. Set aside two stuffed chairs at the Downtown Athletic Club for Tennessee quarterback Peyton Manning and his Florida counterpart, Danny Wuerffel. Get another one ready for Northwestern's Darnell Autry, yet another "slash" player—the actor/tailback. And surely there needs to be a place for Iowa State's Troy Davis or for Florida State's Warrick Dunn. But perhaps the best player of all is a hulking lineman with a voice as soft as custard, Ohio State's Orlando Pace, a 6'6", 320-pound offensive tackle. Or maybe it's USC junior defensive tackle Darrell Russell, 6'4", approximately 320 pounds and nimble enough to dunk a basketball from a standstill.

And once the games begin, many of the other signposts guiding you through the autumn will be familiar ones. Florida







at Tennessee on Sept. 21. Florida State at Miami on Oct. 12. Michigan at Ohio State on Nov. 23. Colorado at Nebraska on Nov. 29. Notre Dame at USC, Florida at Florida State and Miami at Syracuse, all on Nov. 30. In this year, as in most, you can navigate the college football season with just a schedule to show the way. The plots are laid out in August, awaiting the insertion of small details.

There are occasional teams that are surprises (West Virginia in 1988, Georgia Tech in 1990, Washington in 1991, of recent vintage), and occasional players, too. (Who would have thought a year ago that Eddie George would win the Heisman?) But this is not the custom. Change generally affects college football like beach erosion, altering the scenery so little each year that it is hardly noticeable at all. There is something beneficent in this, something that helps obscure the hypocrisy in the sport—a big business masquerading as cozy, down-home pastime.

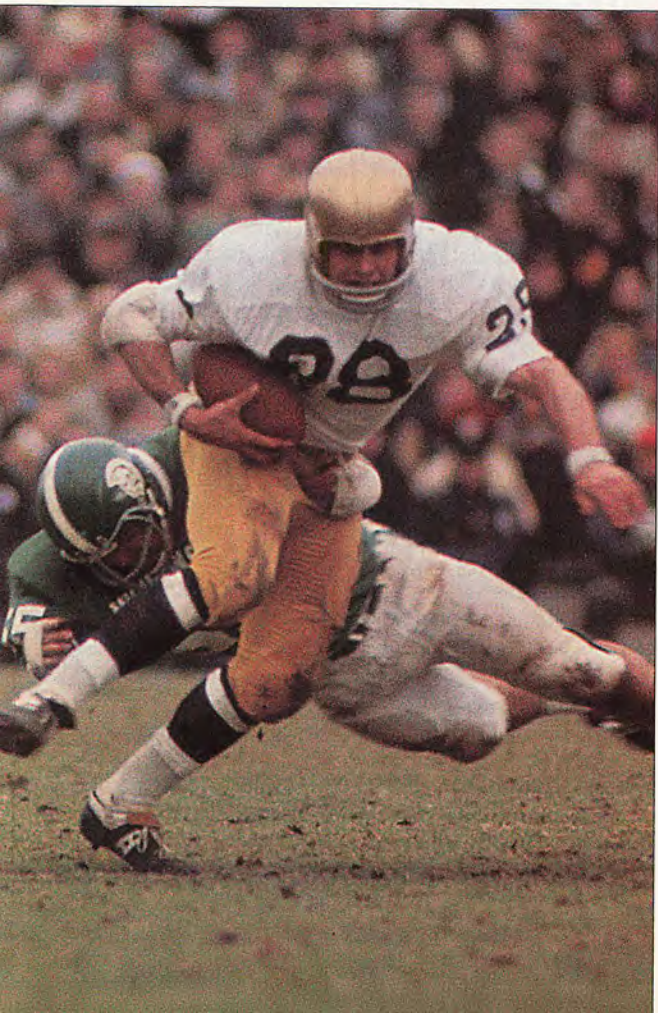
This fall, however, the ocean washes over the shoreline in one wave. And the game changes. Boy, does it change.

The shift from cozy, regional leagues to superconferences without geographic borders, promised since the beginning of the decade, has finally taken place. In addition to the Southeastern Conference, which has had 12 teams in two divisions since 1992, the Big Eight has taken in four members of the deceased Southwest Conference (Baylor, Texas, Texas A&M and Texas Tech) to form the Big 12; and the Western Athletic Conference has adopted three of the four remaining SWC schools (Rice, SMU and TCU) as well as San Jose State, Tulsa and UNLV to swell its ranks to a bloated 16. All three conferences will have championship games on Dec. 7. These, it should be noted, are truly the Games of the Year, where the likes of Nebraska, which enters the season with 25 consecutive wins, or Tennessee could stumble after putting together 11-0 marks.

Even more abruptly, the tie game has been legislated out of existence and, with it, the unique drama created by the possibility of a deadlock. In its place is a fast-food alternative, a tiebreaker that was in effect for bowl games last season and that has been used in lower divisions for as many as 15 years. The format is simple: Team A gets possession on the opponent's 25-yard line and keeps the ball until it runs out of downs, commits a turnover or scores a touchdown or field goal. Then Team B takes a turn. The game ends when one team scores more in its half-inning than the other. There is a huge advantage to winning the coin toss and getting the ball last, knowing what is needed to win, or to stay alive.

***This year will produce no classic ties such as Michigan State-Notre Dame in 1966, Harvard-Yale in '68 and Army-Notre Dame in '46.***

It is a seductive rule change because of its apparent common sense. "I don't think anybody likes to tie," says Arkansas coach Danny Ford. Of







NEIL LEIFER

**Some archfoes, like Oklahoma and Nebraska, won't play yearly now that they're in the Big 12.**

the Fighting Irish's 10-10 tie with Michigan State in 1966 and even Harvard's 29-29 tie with Yale in 1968. It can be argued that any of them—certainly the Harvard-Yale game—would have been less memorable if the tie had been broken. And the very threat of a tie has left deep emotional footprints across the history of the game, forcing coaches to make the late-game choice between kicking an extra point to pull even or attempting a two-point conversion for a win.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne's choice was to go for two in the 1984 Orange Bowl, when a tie with Miami would have given the Cornhuskers the national title. The attempt and failure elevated that game and established Osborne—however else he is regarded—as a man who had the courage to risk a sure thing in pursuit of victory. In the fall of 1987, Florida State coach Bobby Bowden went for two against Miami, failed and lost 26-25. The Seminoles finished 11-1 and lost a chance to play for the national title. Bowden waited six more years for his first championship.

The new rule has virtually killed traditional game-ending suspense. "Now you would almost never go for two to win the game in regulation unless there was some sort of strange circumstance involved," says USC coach John Robinson. College football becomes in this way a little brother to the NFL, whose coaches would sooner floss with barbed wire than attempt a two-point conversion to win a game in the final seconds. They always kick and play OT. Now the colleges can be expected to embrace this same, safe philosophy. "It's a fundamental of football that you go out there to win," says former Syracuse coach Dick MacPherson, whose 1987 team was involved in a bitter 16-16 Sugar Bowl tie with Auburn, when the Tigers kicked a 30-yard field goal with one second to play. "That's all changed [with the new rule]. A tie puts you into

course not. Yet three of the most storied games in history are Notre Dame's 0-0 tie with Army in 1946,

overtime. You just play some more. They're teaching ties now."

The new OT can be entertaining stuff. You can get scores like 58-55, the margin by which Rhode Island beat Maine in a 1982 Division I-AA game, after they were tied 21-21 at the end of regulation. But the tiebreaker is also something less than the game itself, like a soccer shoot-out. "It seems like an artificial way to settle a game," says Penn State coach Joe Paterno.

Colorado coach Rick Neuheisel says, "Maybe it will be exciting for TV and fans, but it doesn't seem like football to me."

Those are the reasons behind not only the tiebreaker but conference expansion as well: excitement, television, a stodgy institution trying to drag itself into the 20th century before the 21st arrives. After all, the tiebreaker promises action and suspense, *Mortal Kombat*-style, but without the decapitations. Conference realignment gives us three monster games in December, when once there was only Army-Navy. And in two years the Pac-10 and the Big Ten join the Bowl Alliance, nearly guaranteeing a national-championship game every year, the biggest change of them all.

Of course, it's also possible that college football isn't moving boldly into the future but that it's frightened, running for security and protection. That superconferences have been created to provide financial safety in numbers, culminating with a megabucks title game to try to help everyone into the black. And that the tiebreaker isn't a solution but a sanctuary for coaches who feared the two-point quandary and now won't have to face it. Just sit tight for overtime. Plus, it gets more teams those precious six wins needed to play in a bowl, which makes more money for those teams and their (super)conferences.

In the end it doesn't matter. Whether from fear or prescience, the game is different this fall.

On the final play of a long night, fourth-and-one in overtime, Tennessee tailback Jay Graham scores the winning touchdown. Tennessee wins its first national title in 45 years. . . .

Nebraska losing. Now, that's change. ■





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A former defensive player,  
Jackson scooted by his old  
counterparts for 780 yards.

# Youth Is Served

*With million-dollar deals having lured their elders to the NFL,  
a dazzling array of sophomore running backs have emerged  
to become the class of college football*

**by Richard Hoffer**





C

kids today, it turns out, would rather have the \$7 million instead of free textbooks. It makes you wonder. What are they teaching in these universities . . . capitalism?

For whatever reason, and we suspect it's often the \$7 million, more and more juniors and seniors who would have once rushed

college kids certainly seem to be getting a better foundation in economics than they used to. Let's see: Work for room and board, or do pretty much the identical labor for \$7 million a year. What to do? It's not quite that cut-and-dried; a diploma does come with the meal money. Still, a lot of

for malt-shop glory on the campus gridiron are now rushing into the NFL marketplace to become miniature moguls. Did you happen to catch the story about second-year Cincinnati Bengals running back Ki-Jana Carter's investments in *The New York Times* business section recently? This is no slam against all you guys who promised Mom you would get your degrees first, but a senior football player is, almost by definition, a kind of failure. What in the world is wrong with him?

With pro prospects going to the NFL pretty much whenever they feel like it—oh, the hardship!—another trend has emerged. Look around, coast to coast, and notice how young this season's college running backs are. Theories abound: The scholarship limitations mean smaller teams and bigger opportunities for younger players; athletes are just better sooner; it's a big country, so there ought to be an 18-year-old here and there who can knock your socks off. In any event, the guys carrying the ball are babies. With no



from Carencro, La., was such a hot prospect that he held a press conference, televised throughout Louisiana, to announce his choice of college. After Faulk arrived at LSU, DiNardo, who was in his first year in Baton Rouge, saw that Faulk would make the age issue moot. "He's highly competitive, very mature," DiNardo says. "He's just one of those kids who likes to play. And he's organized. He was a B-minus student, carrying a full load as a true freshman. He's off the charts as far as I'm concerned."

Some 18-year-olds will simply not be denied. Says Campbell, who became the first freshman running back to start at Texas, "You have to understand how bad I wanted to make it, how much I wanted to be successful. I wasn't going to go back to Tyler, Texas, and work in those rose fields."

Similarly, nobody is prepared to deny Ricky Williams's dreams. Part of his deal at Texas is that he can continue his two-sport career, spending summer vacations in the Phillies' farm system. But football is his first love, and he doesn't at all mind being linked with Campbell, who won the Heisman Trophy in 1977. "There's an empty little case next to Campbell's," says Williams. "Hopefully, it's for my trophy."

In Campbell's day it was rare for young players to get the opportunity to stand out. With scholarships limited to 85, it's no surprise when freshmen bail a team out. It's not even odd that several of these running backs, in addition to being freshmen, were recruited as defenders. Hard to imagine that in another time a young player would have been able to make such an impression that a coach would switch him from one unit to the other. But with fewer players to look at, a coach is better able to scrutinize the ability of each.

In the course of that scrutiny, coaches have discovered that today's 18-year-old is more physically qualified than yesteryear's. "It's still a huge differ-

ence between high school and Division I," says Pasqualoni, "but because of the technology, the coaching, the availability of weight rooms, you're getting a lot of players who are physically advanced. Just the fact that a true freshman like Rob can hold up in summer practice is something."

Still, the biggest reason for the wave of underclassmen is the virtual elimination of the senior class. DiNardo argues that this is a gross overstatement, that every good team today has a solid group of seniors. But you can bet they won't be running backs, not the kind with pro potential. It's one thing for an offensive lineman to stay down on the campus feedlot, beefing up for a pro career, quite another for a tailback to risk million-dollar legs for the sake of another varsity letter.

Two years ago Ki-Jana Carter signed a seven-year, \$19.2 million contract with the Cincinnati Bengals after his junior year at Penn State. Last spring Lawrence Phillips signed a three-year, \$5.625 million contract with the St. Louis Rams after his junior year at Nebraska. It's impossible for a coach to argue that the greater good is an academic degree, not with the dollars being offered to first-round picks. ("For fourth- and fifth-round picks," Pasqualoni says, "there might be different advice.")

Players with NFL credentials now have brief, flashy college careers. Carter's brilliant tenure as a Nittany Lion, for example, was not annotated by many career records, and he will be identified in football history as a Bengal not a Lion.

Another effect of early departures is that the Heisman Trophy, when given to a running back, as it most often is, will tend to be an underclass award. Any back still playing as a senior has to be regarded as a plugger; if he's overlooked by the NFL, he will be similarly invisible to Heisman voters.

And the recruiting process must now take these shortened careers into account. Fewer outstanding freshmen will be redshirted. "Who are you going to redshirt them for? The NFL?" asks Lee

Corso, a former coach at Indiana who is now an analyst for ESPN. "A coach today has got to get his money's worth. You recruit one great running back, you let a year go, you better recruit another one. This is the 1990s."

Maybe Corso is wrong and this year's concentration of young running backs is a bulge moving through the python of college football. But everything argues against that idea. Now that NBA teams routinely sign high school students—and how long ago was it that the NBA wouldn't touch a college junior?—it may be time to acknowledge the shifting timetable of athletic careers. They begin sooner and produce monetary rewards that mock anybody old-fashioned enough to insist on the college "experience."

So here's to all those veteran sophomores, old-timers all. ■

**At 6' 1", 275 pounds, there's no stopping Fuamatu-Ma'afala, as his coach can attest.**



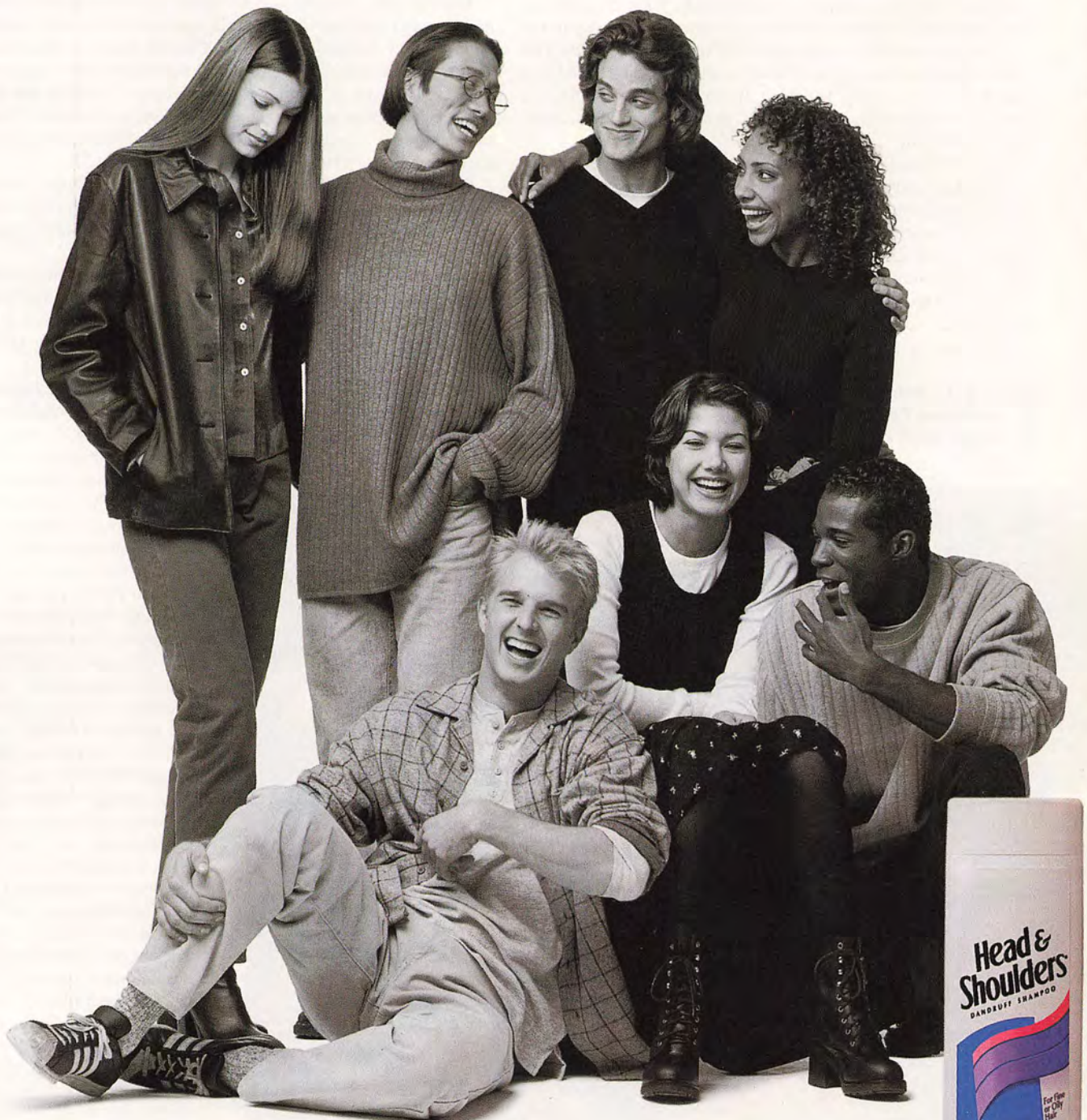
GEORGE FREY



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DAMIAN STROHMEYER

**Stuck behind Phillips, Green didn't get to shine until the season's sixth game.**

## SUPER SOPHOMORES

las Cowboys. Konrad's importance to Syracuse is suggested simply by his number. "We don't give [number 44, previously worn by Ernie Davis, Jim Brown and Floyd Little] to people with just great potential," coach Paul Pasqualoni says.

Why is there so much precocity now? According to some coaches, it dates back to 1973, when the NCAA made freshmen eligible. "It's perfectly normal," says LSU coach Gerry DiNardo, "that of your freshmen, 15 percent will play and five percent will start. It's always been that way."

Maybe, but it's hard to recall as strong a corps of sophomore running backs. Assuming something's going on, what could be at work here? Ara Parseghian, who used freshmen to help produce a national championship at Notre Dame in 1973 (no traditionalist, he), says look at golf. The PGA Tour was once dominated by two or three players, but now a different name wins every week. "There are so many more athletes, so much more talent," says Parseghian. Leave it to a coach to decide that it's just a numbers game—is this

back made from the same stuff as former Orangeman Daryl Johnston, now with the Dal-

las Cowboys. Konrad last year, preferring to ease him into games behind an upperclassman. "We didn't want to put him under any unnecessary pressure," says Pasqualoni.

Also, like Hess, who wanted to get his older players in the game ahead of freshman Manns, most coaches believe loyalty is a concept that works best when it applies to both player and coach. A player who sticks with the program deserves a coach who will stick with him. But nowadays coaches have reason to wonder what their approach should be when athletic directors can't guarantee them long-term employment and players can't guarantee them they'll stick around for the long term. Maybe it's best to win however you can, whenever you can. Might be a good idea to put the best players on the field, and let it go at that.

That's DiNardo's method, one he learned the merits of long ago as a player at Notre Dame. "Fall of '73, I was a junior, and we're told freshmen would be eligible," he remembers. "I spout off: 'Ain't ever gonna be a freshman that will play here.' Big mouth. Prospect comes in, lines up across from me in practice, and I play him right onto the first team. So I'm thinking, maybe they will play, one or two of them."

If DiNardo had any residual prejudice toward underclassmen, he tamped it down when Faulk showed up in Baton Rouge. Faulk, who's

a big country, or what?—but there may be something to his theory. Either this great land is getting better at producing freakish physical specimens who excel at football, or coaches are getting better at knowing where to look.

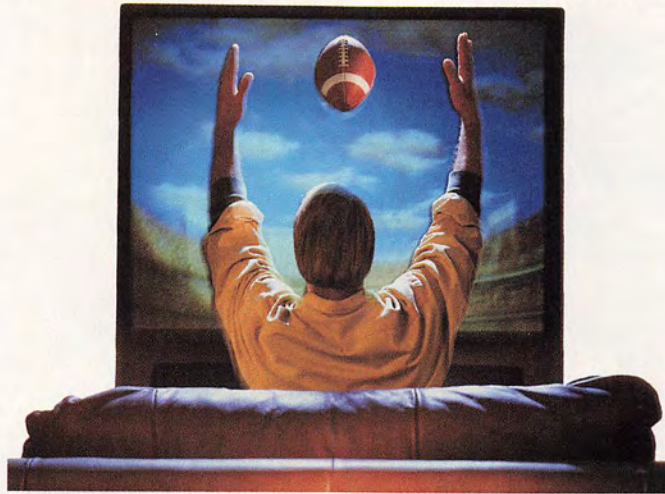
"I do know," Parseghian continues, "that when I was coaching or looking at personnel [as a broadcaster], I didn't see 300-pound linemen. Now everybody has them. Anybody who wonders about the change in the game ought to go down on the field. They look different when you get up close."

Parseghian isn't surprised that running backs come to the fore earlier than other players. Quarterbacks have a lot to learn, and so, for that matter, do offensive linemen. "All the audibles, all the blocking schemes, it's hard to develop quarterbacks and offensive linemen as freshmen," says Parseghian. "But running backs, it's a lot of reaction. That kind of instinct, hitting holes, is not something we coach."

Surely there have always been these physical geniuses, but they had to wait their turn. The bias against young players was such that the NCAA actually institutionalized it. Such prejudice still exists. Syracuse's Pasqualoni never



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PHIL HUBER

**Faulk split time with another freshman but still gained 852 yards for Louisiana State.**

year of maturity might have provided. Chris Fuamatu-Ma'afala of Utah was also a genuine freshman. A 275-pound bruiser from Honolulu, the man of many vowels and few years broke his boss's ankle during preseason practice in 1995, bowling over coach Ron McBride as he ran out of bounds. How good was Fuamatu-Ma'afala? He played every game anyway and gained 834 yards on only 141 carries.

Then there was Ahman Green of Nebraska. How good was he? Good enough, cynics say, for the Cornhuskers to afford morality and suspend Lawrence Phillips (for a little while, at least) after he pled no contest to battering his girlfriend. It's unfair to suggest that coach Tom Osborne wouldn't have disciplined Phillips without a phenom like Green, who rushed for 1,086 yards, on hand, but having another 1,000-yard rusher in the pantry must have made him more comfortable about the decision. Going into last season, only 37 freshmen in Division I-A history had gained at least 1,000 yards—and none had played for Nebraska. Imagine if Green, a six-foot, 210-pounder with 4.34 speed in the 40, had started before the sixth game of the season? No running back last year, no matter his vintage, had a better yards-per-carry average than Green's 7.7.

shirts. These guys were so good, their schools couldn't wait for them, no matter what an extra

Green was one of three freshmen who gained more than 1,000 yards last season. Denvin Manns of New Mexico State, who played in near total obscurity on a losing team, might have gained much more than his 1,120 yards if Aggies coach Jim Hess, by his own admission, packed a few more IQ points. "Just plain dumb," says Hess, who didn't start the 5' 9", 180-pound Manns until the fourth game. "I wanted to play some older players, but it just became apparent he had something very few have." Smarter than Hess was junior running back Ernie Montez, who started the first two games and then left the Aggies after Game 5. "Montez, I guess, saw [Manns's potential] faster than any of us," Hess says. Montez is back for his senior year but has lost his starting spot for good.

Hess wasn't stupid, not really. A coach's natural inclination is to tilt toward veterans. At Central Michigan, Silas Massey, who ran for 1,089 yards as a redshirt freshman, didn't get a start until the season's sixth game, when an upperclassman went down. Massey is a runt like Manns and produces yardage in similar bursts.

Finally, there are three other sophomores worthy of note: Curtis Enis of Penn State, a redshirt freshman last year, gained 683 yards after starting the first game of the 1995 season at line-backer. Florida's Terry Jackson, who began his college career in the defensive backfield, gained 780 yards after being moved to offense the previous spring—"C'mon, Terry, give it a try," coach Steve Spurrier implored. Rob Konrad at Syracuse, who was a true freshman last year when he averaged 6.9 yards per carry, is a full-





ROBERT SEALE/ALLSPORT

upperclassmen around to fill the jobs, freshmen and sophomores are increasingly being pressed into duty, often with spectacular results. There are now so many kids doing man's work that Kathie Lee Gifford ought to be weeping anew. (Her man of course did four-and-out, but that was a hundred years ago.)

Anyway, here's a little gallery of football precocity—nine ball-carriers coming off fabulous freshman years. Hey, we would love for them all to stay, get their degrees and become collegiate institutions, but it's not going to happen. So let's celebrate sophomores, the game's elder statesmen.

Hard to know who should head the list—they're just kids, remember, so they can be kind of unpredictable—but Texas's Ricky Williams should be somewhere near the top. Between his two seasons in baseball's minor leagues (he spent this summer playing outfield for the Class A Piedmont Boll Weevils in the Philadelphia Phillies' system), he rushed for 990 yards, breaking the

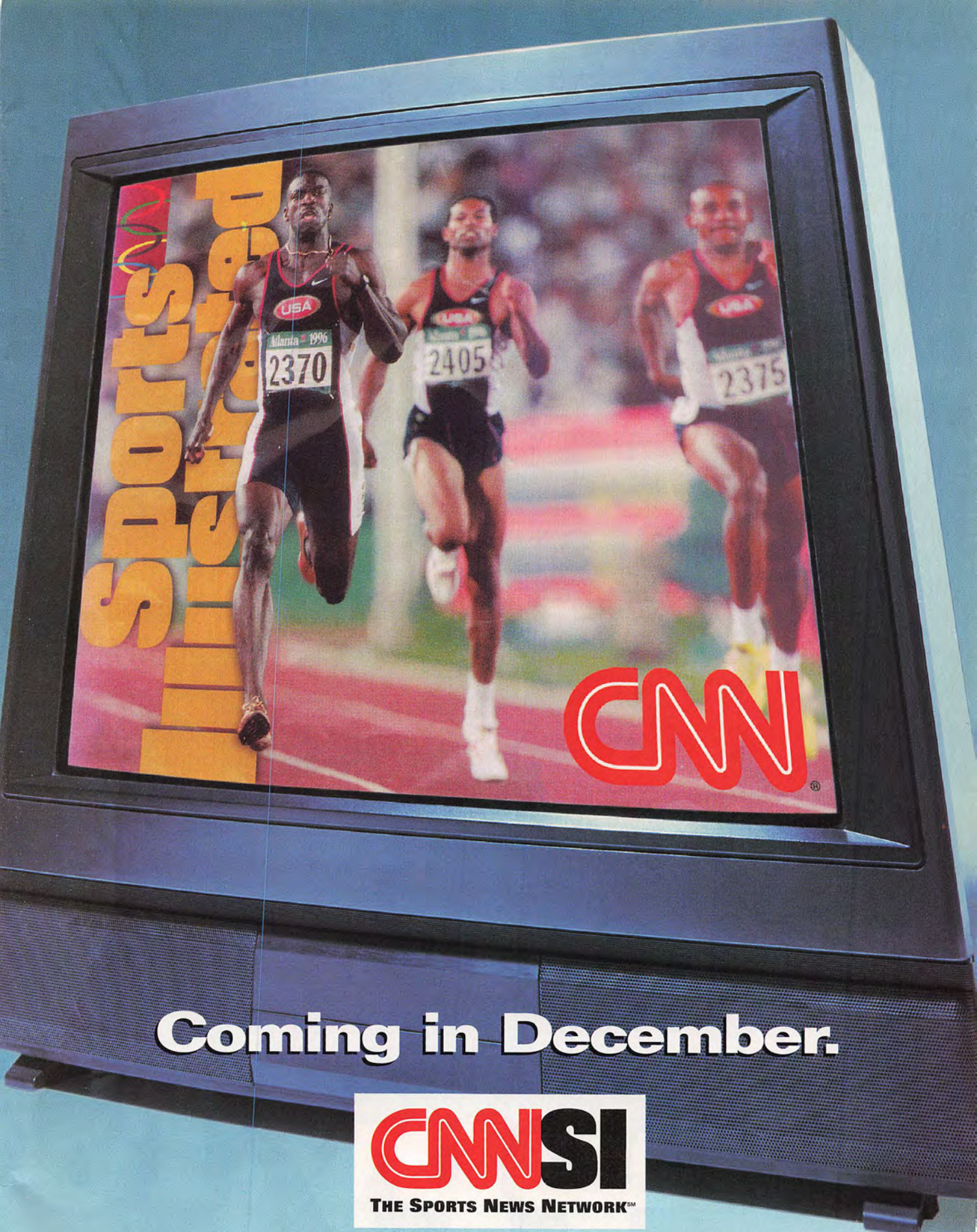
Longhorns' freshman record, set by Earl Campbell in 1974. The comparisons between the two are apparently so vivid that the six-foot, 215-pound Williams is called Little Earl after Campbell, who was six feet, 210 pounds as a freshman. And, so far, neither seems to mind the comparison. "He could be great," says Ancient Earl.

Right up there, too, is Kevin (No Relation to Marshall) Faulk, who gained 852 yards last year at LSU, while sharing the position with, wouldn't you know it, another freshman, Kendall Cleveland, who rushed for 562 yards and 10 touchdowns. The 5' 10", 192-pound Faulk is a shifty type who plays Lightning to the 6' 1", 221-pound Cleveland's Thunder. Each lightning strike, by the way, was good for five yards last season.

Both Williams and Faulk were *true* freshmen, not grizzled red-

***Campbell's lofty records have given Little Earl Williams some heady goals to aim for.***





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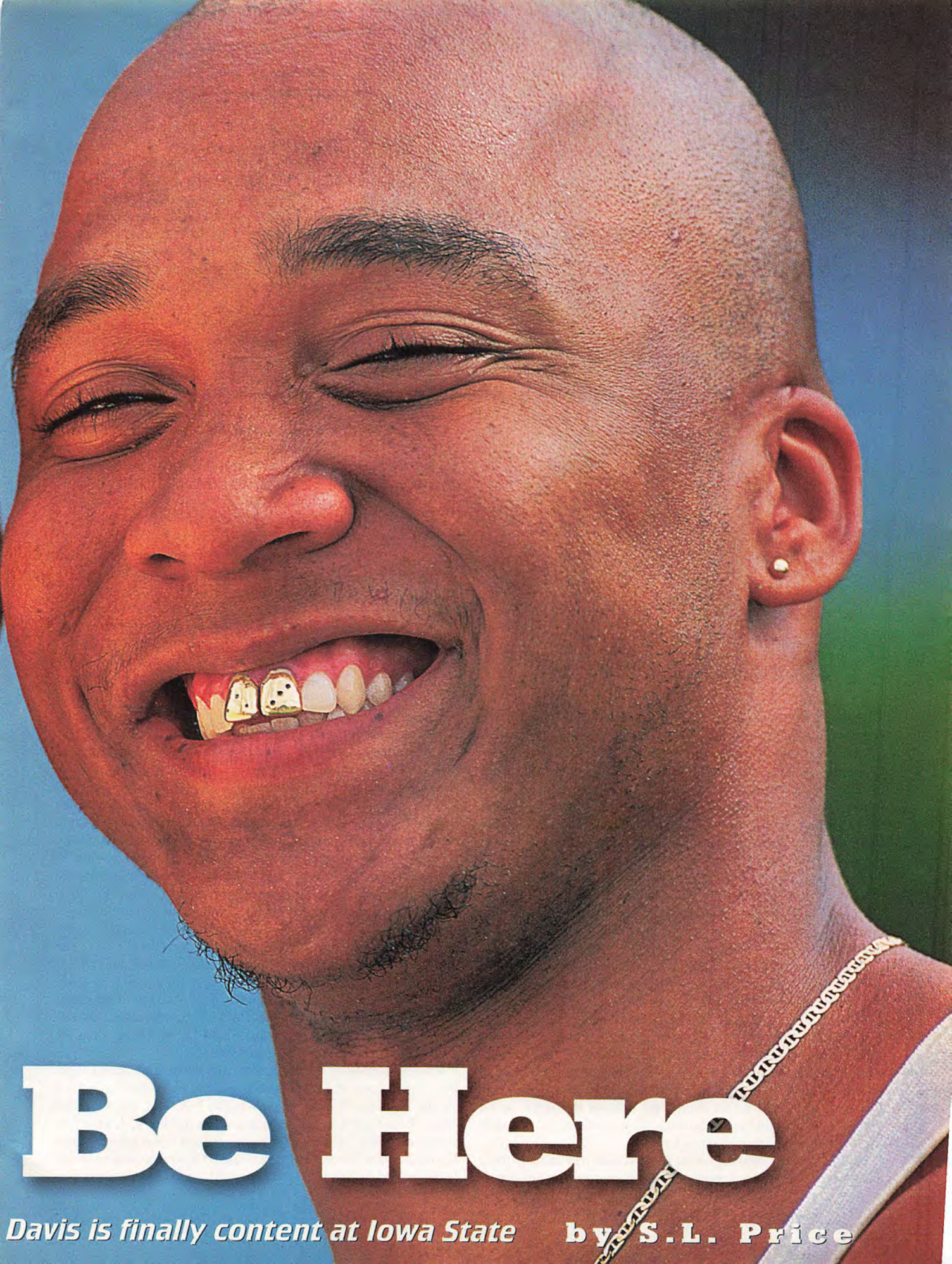
When Darren  
and Troy (left)  
get together,  
the Cyclones'  
backfield will  
be in motion.

BILL FRANKS

# Happy To

*With his brother as a running mate, tailback Troy*





# Be Here

*Davis is finally content at Iowa State*

**by S.L. Price**





VINCENT MUZIK

sickness was awful, just pitiful. Crying—and I mean crying like a baby. I'd stay there till two in the morning."

August was a nightmare, then came September: The Cyclones began their spiral toward a winless season, the head coach was on borrowed time, and Davis felt alone and betrayed. He would call home and tell his mother and father he was going to kill himself. Since they had no money to bring him back to Florida, there was nothing to do but console him. Asked how, at the time, he expected Troy's freshman year to end, his younger brother Darren says, "Suicide."

"I was pretty close to it," Troy says. "I felt that bad." He gives a little laugh at this, and from the perspective of two years later, it does seem slightly comical. Davis is, after all, the running back who brought distinction to Iowa State last year, becoming the first sophomore in history—and only the fifth NCAA player ever—to rush for more than 2,000 yards in a season. (The others were Oklahoma State's Barry Sanders in 1988, USC's Marcus Allen in '81, Colorado's Rashaan Salaam in '94 and Nebraska's Mike Rozier in '83.) He carries himself as you would expect someone who finished fifth in the Heisman Trophy balloting in 1995 and may finish first in '96: gracefully, his muscles bunching with every step.

His high school coach describes the 5' 8", 185-pound Davis as a pit bull: small and savage. His eyes are watchful, and his massive head and shoulders taper down to

tiny feet. If that upper body isn't menacing enough, Davis has adorned himself with the emblems of gangsta chic:

**Last year Davis became the first sophomore ever to rush for more than 2,000 yards.**

two gold-plated front teeth and a mass of tattoos. He had a pit bull and the number 1001 emblazoned on his left pectoral after he crossed that yardage barrier last year. A crest on his left arm commands THANK GOD, and his initials are carved into his right biceps.

Indeed, Davis looks the very essence of toughness, and it is all a sham. Anyone who knows him will tell you how fragile he is, less pit bull than retriever—eager to please and easy to hurt. Once during practice at Miami's Southridge High, coach Don Soldinger ripped into Davis, then a junior, for some mistake and couldn't believe what came next. Davis, who would lead Southridge to an undefeated season and the state title the next year and who is renowned for his taste for bruising contact, burst into tears. "He said, 'Coach, I don't want to disappoint you,'" says Soldinger, now an assistant at Miami. "If you ask this kid to do something and he feels you're in his corner, he'd die for you. He takes everything literally, and the criticism really hurt him."

Romero found this out at the first team meeting of Davis's freshman year at Iowa State. The coach, who had cultivated Davis when all the big-time Florida schools backed off and stood by him when he struggled to nail a passing score on the ACT, gave him a profanity-filled blistering for having turned down tutoring help. Romero called Davis a baby and said he would send him home. Davis called Soldinger, stuttering with pain. Davis never for-

THE BUS was a mistake. Troy Davis could feel it with each mile; a cold dread uncoiled inside him as town after faceless Illinois town spun by in the dark. Aurora, Dixon, Moline. None of it had sat right—not the long, storm-tossed plane ride from Miami, not the five butt-crushing hours on the gummy floor of a Chicago bus terminal, and certainly not this 10-hour meander across the heartland. All around him passengers gave off that low hum of anticipation, looking *forward*, wanting to go somewhere. Not Davis. No, all he could think of was where he had come from. It was as if he could feel his heart flattening beneath the wheels of the bus as they rolled into Iowa. Davenport, Walcott Junction, Cedar Rapids. When he stepped off the bus in Ames in the morning, the greatest running back the town had ever seen took one look and knew: I hate it here.

Typical, yes? Isn't it the freshman's fate to regret, if only for a while, even going to college? Trouble is, for Davis in the late summer and autumn of 1994, the loathing never ceased. His first day at Iowa State he called his parents in South Miami Heights and announced, "I'm ready to come home." He didn't unpack for two weeks, and every day he called home three, four, 10 times, crying thick tears and saying he couldn't take it; he had nobody close in Ames, he had nothing. One of the assistant coaches, Arnie Romero, would go to his room and rub his shoulders as he sobbed, and try to find soothing words. "Come on, Sugar," he would say. "It's all right. Your daddy's here."

Nothing helped. Nobody on the football staff had seen anything like it. "Never in my whole goddam life," Romero says. "The home-



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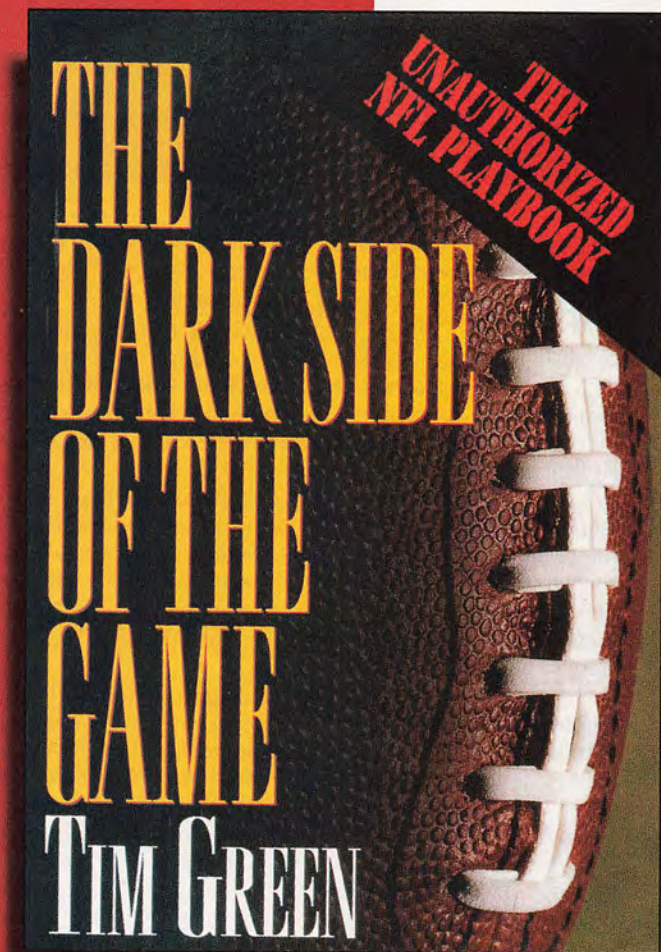
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BILL FRANKS

gave Romero. "He was saying he really doesn't need me now," Davis says. "He called all the time when he was recruiting me, but once I got up there, he turned his back on me."

At times Davis felt as if the whole place had. Cyclones head coach Jim Walden had taken one look at Davis's performance in high school—he had been the first back in Dade County to rush for more than 2,000 yards in a season—and thought he would build his offense around him. But while the NCAA clearinghouse delayed approval of his transcript, Davis missed most two-a-days, and by the time he worked his way into shape, the Cyclones had deemphasized the I-back in their offense. In addition Walden, who was aware of Davis's unhappiness in Ames, says he was afraid to count too heavily on a guy who might bolt town any moment. Davis finished the season with only 35 carries and was still plagued by homesickness. He blew off classes and came, he says, "very, very close to flunking out."

He didn't care. He had never lived outside of Florida before. He had been so mystified by snow on his recruiting trip that he had tried to take some home in a bottle. Now here he was in frigid Ames, a town so white that Romero, who's Hispanic, enlisted his tavern cronies to help sell the place to black kids. "I'd get this guy named Smoke," says Romero. "And he'd come out and say, 'Oh, this place is so great!' The next day I'd bring out a guy named Sam, and he'd say, 'Oh, man, this place is great!' Those are the only black people I had up there to help recruit the kids: Sam and Smoke."

One morning in September, when Davis had finally had enough, he called his father, William Webster, at 3:30 am, told him his bags were packed and demanded to know when the next bus was leaving Ames. "If I'd had money in my pocket, I'd have been home," Davis says. "It was just a question of money."

His father understood better than anyone. It had been the same way for him when he left South Dade for the first time, shipped to the juvenile home in Mariana, Fla., in 1968, for steal-

ing cars. During his 11 months there he had a yearning for home that burned like poison, and when he finished doing time in juvey and the Job Corps and the Army, he went back to South Dade intent on staying for good. He worked every kind of job, and met Euler Davis. They picked tomatoes in the steamy fields and had seven kids, all built the way Webster was—like a pit bull—all learning the lessons he lived.

"I am the biggest reason for them to stay in school," says Webster, who now sprays yards as an exterminator while his wife works as a maid. "I told them: Drop out and your life is over."

The Webster-Davis family has bunkered in the same house in the concrete-block development of South Miami Heights for 19 years. They've gone to church together, learned to depend on one another. Growing up, the six boys slept in the same room, rushing to the shower because the first three out grabbed the bed and the others got stuck on the floor. They never fought.

As tight as the six brothers were, no one could get between Darren and Troy.

**With Darren (on bench) around, Troy will have help carrying Iowa State's load.**

Darren was a year younger than Troy and followed him everywhere. Four years ago, when Troy got his teeth plated, Darren did too. When they

played Optimist Football, Darren made openings in the line and Troy ran through them. "I just *knew* there'd be a hole for me," Troy says. "And every time I'd break a long one, Darren would always be right behind me."

They played together at Southridge during Troy's senior year, Darren in the slot, Troy at tailback. In one game Troy returned the old favor, moving to fullback and bulling open holes so Darren could run free. In the 1993 state championship game, against Bradenton, Troy scored three touchdowns and Darren four. The year after Troy left, Darren became the *second* back in Dade County history to rush for more than 2,000 yards in one season.

To Iowa State cornerback Kevin Hudson, who played against the Davises in high school and who roomed with Troy his first two years in college, Troy's misery in Ames is easily explained. "They're like twins," says Hudson. "Troy wasn't used to being separated from his brother." When Darren visited Ames for three weeks during Troy's freshman year, William and Euler suddenly realized that the phone calls had stopped. "Well . . . Darren's up *here*," Troy explained.

Darren himself would not tolerate Troy's whining. One night in the fall of Troy's freshman year, when he was home on Thanksgiving break, word came that the oldest Davis brother, 24-year-old George, had been shot. During a dispute over a radio, a man had pulled out a .38 and fired five bullets into him. Troy hurried to the scene. "A shiver came through my body when I saw him there," says Troy. "I saw the blood on the street. My mother was crying, and I couldn't even move. I thought he wasn't going to make it." George survived, and two days after the shooting Troy returned to Ames. The calls kept coming. Troy kept asking for Darren. He kept crying. He kept saying he wanted to come home. "It was making *me* sick," Darren says. "A big grown boy like that. . . ."



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"You don't know what it's like," Troy would say.

Darren didn't care. "Don't call anymore!" he would shout. Then he would hang up.

Everyone who didn't list Davis first in last year's Heisman balloting had a good reason. Too young. Too many losses (Iowa State was 3-8). Too many yards when the outcome was already clear. But the fact is undeniable: Davis could not be stopped. He ran for 183 yards against Kansas State when it had the nation's best defense. He ran for 89 yards against Oklahoma after the Sooners, whose defense was No. 1 against the rush, had vowed to keep him below 88 and deny him the distinction of reaching 1,000 yards in only the season's fifth game. He ran for 121 yards against top-ranked Nebraska. Davis finished the year with 2,010 yards and 15 touchdowns. Ohio State's Eddie George, with 1,826 yards and 24 TDs, won the Heisman. "If Eddie George can rush for 1,800 at Ohio State, Davis might've rushed for 3,000 at Ohio State," says Walden, who was a TV commentator in Ames last season. "He has tremendous balance. And an awareness that only the great backs have: He knows where the next block is before the blocker knows. I watched not more than a quarter of football before I knew he was something special. Then my next reaction was, Who am I fooling? I'm at Iowa State."

Davis should've been the next great back to play at a Florida powerhouse, the next Emmitt Smith or Warrick Dunn. But his two failures to pass the ACT made the local schools back off and gave Romero his opening—and he took it, calling William and Euler daily, offering Troy a free ride if he could pass the test on his third and last try. When Troy finally succeeded, in May of his senior year, Florida State and Miami rushed in with scholarship offers, but the Cyclones had stuck by him and he stuck by them. Romero had pulled off one of the great recruiting coups in history.

That said, Davis had every intention of transferring when Walden resigned at the end of the '94 season. However, new coach Dan McCarney, fresh from Wisconsin, notched his first victory by gaining Davis's trust and insisting that he would be the focus of the offense. "The first day we got into live drills, he lit up one of our linebackers," McCarney says. "A lot of backs block, but they don't really like it. Troy stepped up and just stunned him. You don't see many running backs do that. All the coaches looked at one another; we knew we had something amazing."

So began a year of amazing feats. Davis rushed for 291 yards in the opener against Ohio, 302 against UNLV. Over the season he averaged 182.7 yards per game, 5.8 yards per carry, and he was

named first-team All-America. He recovered in class, attaining a 2.92 GPA last fall to help lift his overall average to its current 2.22. He became the first player to rush for 2,000 yards or more and not win the Heisman. He didn't care. "I wasn't disappointed at all," he says. "I came out of the blue: Troy Davis? Who is Troy Davis? Nobody even knew. But now all eyes will be on me."

They were all after Darren: Miami, Florida State, West Virginia, Kentucky and dozens of others. It didn't matter that he had broken his right leg in two places his senior year at Southridge and had played in only four games. Recruiters took one look at Troy's '95 season

and they came calling. But they needn't have bothered. Darren will be a freshman at Iowa State this fall. There was never any doubt. "He wanted to come play with his brother," says Troy.

A cloudy afternoon in South Miami Heights. Darren sits at his parents' kitchen table, Troy looks through cabinets for something to chew on. He says to Darren, "It's a whole different level now. You can't just step on the field and say you can do it. You got to work in the weight room hard." Darren nods, and Troy says, "But both of us work. All the coaches will tell you: The Davis boys always work hard."

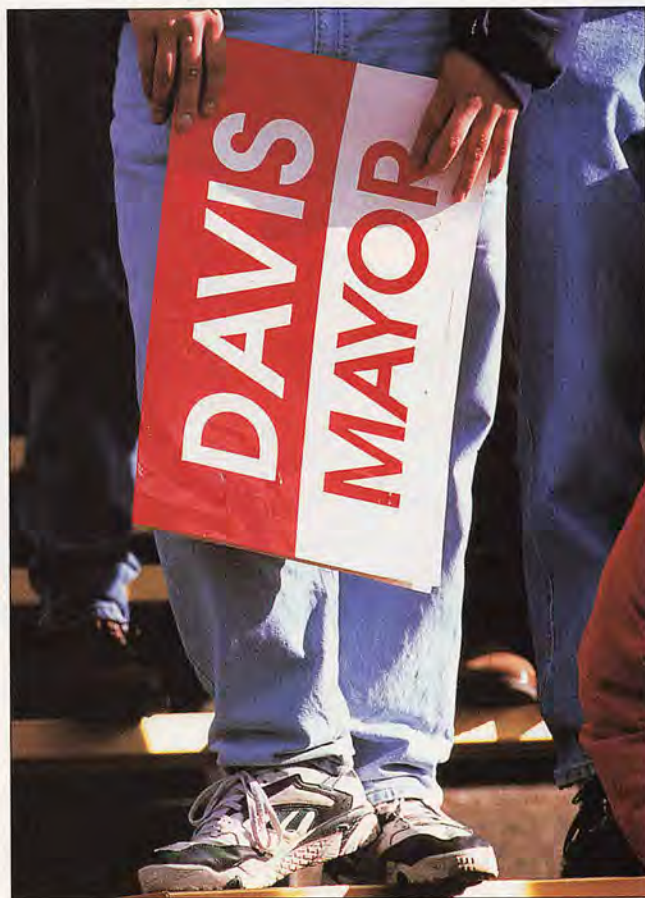
Darren needs this. He probably could use a year of redshirting to rehabilitate his leg, but he doesn't want it. Should Troy approach last year's numbers, he's sure to enter the NFL draft, and Darren wants them to play in the same backfield one last season. He wants to make sure Troy doesn't get complacent. He wants Troy to win that Heisman. "He's the only one who can push me," says Troy, "because I know if I slip, he'll be the starting tailback."

**Just as Davis has warmed up to Ames, so has Ames warmed up to Davis.**

Darren nods and says, "That's the thing about Troy: If I run for 100 yards, he's got to get 200. If I get two touchdowns, he's got to get four." Darren stands. The two brothers roll out the front door in a rush and get in the car for the ride to the gym.

Troy needs this. He is a quiet person, and he feels most comfortable with someone who understands him without words. He has been waiting for Darren for two years. "I'll have fun, because I know he'll be with me wherever I go," Troy says. "I'll be happy."

The two are in the gym now, Darren lifting a 60-pound weight with each arm. Behind him Troy spots him almost tenderly, his hands cupping Darren's elbows, his eyes searching his brother's face for any sign of pain. But everything is fine. They are strong together. This autumn in Ames, Troy Davis finally plays at home. ■





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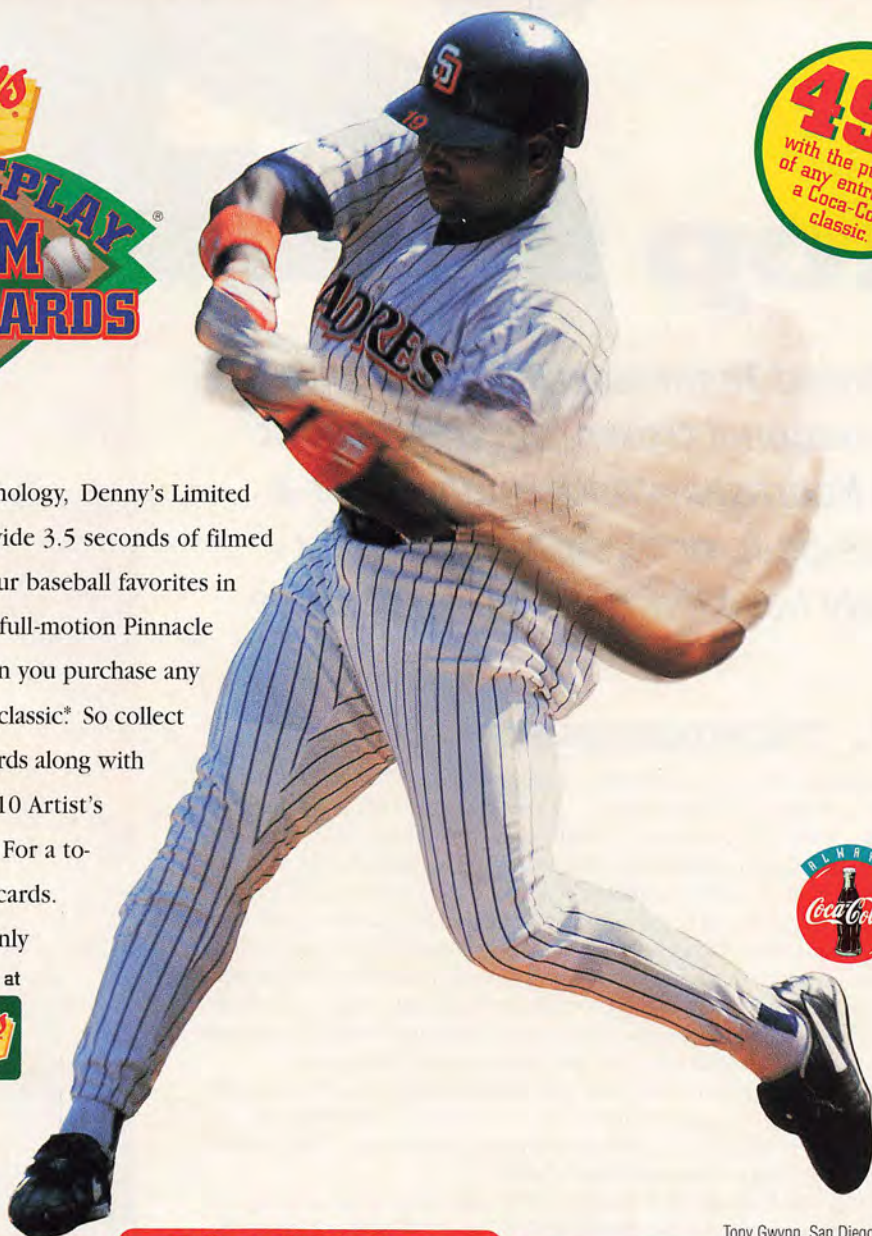
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# Top 20

***Talented Tennessee is the favorite for the national crown, but don't count out Nebraska, which hungers for a three-peat, or Florida, which may finally have learned to play defense***

## 1. TENNESSEE

The Volunteers might as well send out engraved notes: *You are cordially invited to our national championship.* . . . Even Neyland Stadium has been expanded—from 91,902 seats to 102,485—as if to host a gigantic party. Tennessee has the best quarterback in college football in junior Peyton Manning (page 108), one of the best tailbacks in school history (senior Jay Graham) and a pass rusher who is being favorably compared with former Vol Reggie White (junior Leonard Little). The schedule brings both Florida and Alabama to Knoxville, each after Tennessee has had a week off, and the Vols get eight days to prepare for their toughest road game, at Georgia on Oct. 12. In all, nine of the team's 11 regular-season games will be played within the borders of the state of Tennessee (the Vols face Mississippi in Memphis).

"I think people in Tennessee have always talked more about winning the Southeastern Conference, but never used the *n* word," says Manning. Actually, it's *two* words, Peyton, and, as Manning himself says, "This year we should use the words: *national championship.*"

Whether the Vols win that national title depends in large part on how well they recover from last September's 62-37 loss to Florida in Gainesville, a game they led 30-14 late in the second quarter. "Still don't know what happened," says junior wideout Marcus Nash. Tennessee won its last eight games and finished No. 3 in the nation, but by the numbers—that 25-point loss to No. 2 Florida, which subsequently lost to Nebraska by 38 in the Fiesta Bowl—the Vols were far from the top. "I prefer to think that we were 30 minutes away from playing for the national title," says Manning.

The core of the '95 team returns, beginning with Manning, who threw for a school-record 2,954 yards last fall. Also back are Manning's two

**Graham (25) doesn't expect a repeat of the Vols' downfall last year at Florida.**

JOHN BIEVER









# TOP 20

leading receivers: senior Joey Kent, who had a school-record 69 catches for 1,055 yards, and Nash, a former high school All-America, who had 43 catches for 512 yards.

Graham, whose sister, Kim, won a gold medal in the 4x400-meter relay at the Atlanta Olympics, was a track star himself at Concord (N.C.) High. He rushed for a school-record 1,438 yards last fall, but two runs he never completed are the ones he remembers most vividly. His two fumbles in the third quarter of the Florida debacle led to 14 Gator points and accelerated Tennessee's collapse. "I think about the fumbles every day," he says.

This year Graham will run behind a line that has four new starters—Robert Poole, a 6' 3", 291-pound tackle is the only returnee. But not to worry: The Vols *always* come up with a good offensive line, the way Brigham Young always finds a good quarterback. The newcomer being counted on most heavily is 6' 5", 275-pound junior left tackle Trey Teague, who not only shares an apartment with Manning but now also must try to protect his blind side.

Fortunately for Teague and his colleagues, they'll have to line up opposite the tenacious Little only during the week. Little, whom Tennessee lists at 6' 2", 230 pounds ("I weigh a lot more than that, really," he says), had 11 sacks last year. He came to Knoxville from Asheville, N.C., in the fall of 1993 but was sent home because he had not met the NCAA's minimum academic standards. He eventually spent a year at Coffeyville (Kans.) Community College before returning to Tennessee last year. "The day they sent me home from here was the worst day of my life," he says. "I had two years with nothing to do but think about my future."

Tennessee players have had 12 months to think about their future. For them, a party lies ahead. RSVP, Sugar Bowl, New Orleans, La.

—TIM LAYDEN

## 2. NEBRASKA

Scott Frost labors in the shadows of past Nebraska quarterbacks. As he struggles to master a complex offense, Frost knows he will be compared with Tommie Frazier, who left Lincoln last season after establishing himself as one of the best option quarterbacks in history. Watching over Frost is another great Cornhuskers signal-caller from the past, Turner Gill, now the team's quarterbacks coach.

"There are a lot of expectations," says Frost, a 6' 3", 215-pound junior who transferred from Stanford after the 1994 season. "People try to compare me to Coach Gill and Tommie Frazier, but I don't care what they say now. What matters is what they say in January."

Gill, for one, is already saying very complimentary things about Frost. "Scott will be more than an adequate replacement for Tommie," he says. "He has all the tools." By tools, Gill is referring to Frost's strong arm (he can throw the ball more than 80 yards), speed (he runs the 40 in 4.61 seconds) and intelligence (he has a 3.69 GPA as a business administration major).

If Frost is all that Gill says he is, then coach Tom Osborne has a good chance of winning an unprecedented third consecutive national title this season. "It would be nice to have a shot at a third one," says Osborne. "We have a good enough team. But realistically, just the fact that you have to win 13 ball games against a tough schedule makes it very difficult."

The Cornhuskers are off to a good start—that is, no players have been arrested so far. The bad apples from last season's team, whose numerous run-ins with the law sullied Nebraska's national title, have exhausted their eligibility, quit school or gone off to the NFL. "Last season was difficult for everyone," says sophomore tailback Ahman Green. "We got ragged on a lot, and some of it was deserved, but this year we're going to show what Nebraska players are really like."



**With Wistrom and Farley (43) back, the Cornhuskers stack up near the top again.**

Already, the six-foot, 210-pound Green looks as if he could become one of the finest I-backs

ever at Nebraska. He gained 1,086 yards on just 141 attempts (7.7 yards per carry) last season and is looking to better those numbers this year. Three of his linemen return, and the other two projected starters saw considerable playing time last fall, when the Cornhuskers led the nation in rushing with a 399.8 yards-per-game average.

Frost will be the one giving Green the ball. Frost may never make the seas part, as Frazier did while running the option, but he is fast and agile. A football, basketball and track star at Wood River (Neb.) High, Frost started five games at safety and two at quarterback while playing at Stanford in 1994. And Frost has more talented players beside him now. "I feel real comfortable with the offense," he says. "But I'll tell you what. I'm going





to feel even more comfortable with that defense on my side.”

Osborne might just have his finest defensive team in 24 years as head coach in Lincoln. Seven starters are back from a unit that finished fourth nationally in scoring defense, allowing an average of 13.6 points per game. The front seven includes a trio of All-Americans—weakside linebacker Terrell Farley and ends Jared Tomich and Grant Wistrom—and the biggest middle linebacker in the Big 12 in 6' 4", 250-pound senior Jon Hesse. If the defense can outperform last year's unit, a three-peat is possible.

—LARS ANDERSON

### 3. FLORIDA

You dread bringing it up. You know he must have heard about it seven billion times, and you know he can't *enjoy* talking about the most devastating loss in school history. But you can't really discuss the Gators' 1996 season without talking about how the

'95 season ended. “So, er, Lawrence, about the Fiesta Bowl. . . .”

“I think I learned a lot from that game,” safety Lawrence Wright says of Florida's 62–24 loss to Nebraska. “I’ve never been a part of a game like that, where we played so poorly as a whole team.”

No Gator had ever been a part of a game like that. Florida was 12–0 going into the game; if the Gators had won, they would have been national champions for the first time. “I think about it often, what we could have done better, differently in that game,” says Wright. “It makes me hungry and keeps the team focused on the task at hand.”

Make no mistake: The task at hand is to win the national title—another SEC crown (the fifth in six years) would not be enough. And considering that the Gators' Fun 'n' Gun offense averaged an SEC-record 534.4 yards per game last year while their multiple 40 defense allowed Nebraska to roll up 629 yards, how do you suppose Florida plans to accomplish that task?





**If things keep falling their way, Carruth and Colorado could make a run at the title.**

Gainesville, Bob Stoops, fresh from overseeing Kansas State's vaunted defense, has installed a 4-3 scheme that is, according to Wright, "more aggressive." Led by Wright, the Gators' secondary will be among the best in the country. Wright and another senior, cornerback Anthone Lott, were All-SEC picks last season.

On offense Florida may be even better than last season—which is saying a lot in light of the Gators' SEC-record 44.5-points-per-game scoring average in '95. Terry Jackson, Fred Taylor and Elijah Williams all return and will again rotate at tailback once Taylor returns from a four-game suspension. And senior quarterback Danny Wuerffel, whose 178.4 passing efficiency rating last fall was the best in NCAA history, has already proved adept at directing the Florida attack.

A favorite of Florida fans, Wuerffel inspired cheers from Gainesvillians during the off-season, too—simply by running down University Avenue. Of course, he was carrying the Olympic torch at the time. Says the modest Wuerffel in explaining his torch-bearing technique, "Just tried to keep the feet going." When it came time to hand off the torch, Wuerffel's target was wideout Chris Doering. It was the last time Wuerffel would pass anything to Doering, his leading receiver last year and one of only three offensive starters from the '95 team not returning this fall.

Last season's defensive coordinator, Bob Pruett, left to become the coach at Marshall. The new man in

passing efficiency rating before blowing out his right knee in the fourth week of the season. His replacement, John Hessler, stepped in and set or tied 12 school records, many while throwing to wide receivers Rae Carruth (1,008 yards and nine TDs), James Kidd (4.3 speed) and Phil Savoy (49 receptions), all of whom return.

The backfield also remains intact. Last season's leading rusher, junior Herchell Troutman (826 yards and five rushing TDs), is joined by juniors Lendon Henry and Marlon Barnes, who combined for 907 yards, 5.3 yards per carry and 10 TDs in 1995.

Despite that avalanche of talent, the Colorado defense dominated during spring practice. "Any team that wins a championship wins with defense," says linebackers coach Brian Cabral. "And this year we have the horses to do it." Colorado is paced up front by Greg Jones, a 6' 4", 250-pound senior defensive end who led the team in sacks (eight) and quarterback pressures (16). And after spring practice there's no longer concern about senior cornerback Dalton Simmons, who sat out last year with torn knee ligaments.

Linebackers Matt Russell (page 68), Ron Merkerson and Hannibal Naves provide much of the speed, savvy and fury that fuel the Buffaloes' new 4-3 defense. "Our philosophy is, If we can get sacks and fumbles and big hits and disrupt an offense, then we'll give up a bomb now and then, no problem, because it won't be enough to put the wind back in their sails," says Russell. "We're in command. This new defense fits our style."

Now if the Buffaloes can just find a schedule maker more to their liking.

—DAVID FLEMING

## 4. COLORADO

Thanks to the newly formed Big 12 conference, Colorado has one of the toughest schedules in the country this season, with league games against Texas A&M, Kansas, Texas, Kansas State and a regular-season finale at Nebraska. If the Buffaloes come through all that and improve on their 10-2 mark of a year ago, they should climb higher than their No. 5 ranking in last season's final poll. Slip up, though, and things could get ugly. "The Big 12 will be a dog-eat-dog conference," says coach Rick Neuheisel.

The Buffaloes' offense was potent in '95, ringing up nearly 500 yards per game, and it could be just as dangerous this season. Nine starters are back, including senior quarterback and Heisman Trophy candidate Koy Detmer, who had an amazing 189.4



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started when the  
boar was poured!"***

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# Wild Thing

***Emotional doesn't begin to describe Colorado's Matt Russell, the best middle linebacker in college football***

**by Johnette Howard**

IT'S MID-JUNE, the sun is glinting off the aluminum bleachers in deserted Folsom Field, and Matt Russell, Colorado's All-America linebacker, is half-a-year removed from his last football game. But he looks as if he just played eight quarters against Nebraska. Angry red scratches stand out on his thick right arm as he absentmindedly dabs a few fingers beneath one nostril and explains, "Just checking for blood." Two nights earlier he had been teasing his 26-year-old brother, Randy, about being an old man when—"BOOM!" Matt says with a laugh—Randy, a former linebacker at Arkansas, caught him with a forearm shiver to the face.

Now Matt is rubbing his swollen nose, which is red and bent a little to the right. "He broke it," Russell says, laughing again.

Not even a freshly broken nose can squelch the inspiration Russell gets the next day when he parks his black Jeep in front of his Boulder apartment and Nate Chine, his best friend from high school, climbs out the other side of the vehicle. Chine, who played linebacker at Air Force after starting beside Russell at Belleville East (Ill.) High, makes the mistake of turning his back. Russell takes a two-step running start and—"BANG!"—his blindside hit sends Chine flying into the screen door. The screen explodes out and clatters on the ground like a pot lid. Chine and Russell exchange startled looks. They look back at the door, which is hanging crooked on its hinges. Then they both break up laughing.

For Russell, there's little difference between life on the field and off. He lives to have fun and loves to play aggressive football, and often the twain meet. Usually with a BOOM! and a BANG!

He's a 6' 2", 245-pound wrecker with a body by Caterpillar. He plays with a fury that has made him the leading candidate to win the Butkus Award as the nation's top linebacker. Says one NFL scout, "Colorado has had some pretty good linebackers the past few years—Greg Biekert, who's with the Raiders, the Patriots'

Ted Johnson. But they're not nearly as good as Russell. This kid just takes people on."

Russell is so competitive that he fumed when the bass in his favorite fishing hole near Boulder suddenly quit biting for a few weeks this summer. Soon he and Colorado tight end Matt Lepsis were hustling back to the pond with two diving masks, two snorkels and, alas, just one set of fins—they each wore just one flipper as they "sleuthed around," as Russell says, in search of the shy fish. No slime-slicked bass was going to get the best of Matt Russell.

He's just as driven between the sidelines. If someone beats him on a play, Russell turns into a vigilante in shoulder pads. A critical look from linebackers coach Brian Cabral is enough to whip him into an arm-flailing, teeth-gnashing frenzy. Soon Russell's nostrils are flaring like a racehorse's and his outrage is visible; teammates can see his chest rising and falling as he awaits the next snap, his body coiled like a spring.

"When he gets like that he's just going to run out and hit somebody as hard as he can," says Cabral. What's wrong with that? Says Cabral, "They don't always have the football when he goes after them."

Even teammates who grab a fistful of Russell's jersey in practice know they risk being broadsided or goaded into a fight on the next play. Russell lasted all of three snaps before getting thrown out of Colorado's first spring scrimmage this year. "I was coming on a blitz and, well, I don't agree with the rule that quarterbacks shouldn't be hit," he says. "When I got close to [quarterback John] Hessler, I thought about pulling up. Then I thought, Nah . . . I'm not gonna stop. So I sacked him." And Hessler was Russell's roommate.

Russell reserves a special antipathy for impudent running backs. He says, "I had one guy in the pile tell me once, 'Hey, hey,





you can't get the ball from me.' So I said, 'Oh? All right.' Then I started bending back the guy's fingers, pulling and twisting and grabbing at them."

And if Russell gets really mad? "I pinch 'em," he says. "They hate that. You know, you're really vulnerable on the insides of your thighs. So I pinch their skin as hard as I can. I grab it and roll it and twist it and pull on it. And you can hear them going 'Ooh, ooh, ouch!'"

Matt's father, Phil, who recently retired from the Air Force with the rank of colonel, says it has always been thus. "Are you familiar with something called the Myers-Briggs Personality Indicator Test?" he asks. "When Matt was tested as a child, he graded out 'very emotional.'" No kidding.

Matt was born in Tokyo and led a military brat's life, moving 11 times before he got out of high school. His start in organized football came in seventh grade, when he played for a base team in Ramstein, Germany, but he dreamed of being a football star long before then.

Matt's father was a defensive end at Baylor, and his maternal grandfather, Nelson Rainey, was a center at Henderson State in Arkansas. "I remember being nine or 10 and visiting him," Matt says. "I'd drag him out on the street and I'd say, 'Granddad, I want you to watch me run.' He'd say, 'Boy, you look like a fullback!' And I'd get so excited, I just couldn't do enough after that. For as long as I can remember, this is all I've wanted to be."

And yet Russell nearly quit in his first year at Colorado. He was being redshirted and says he "felt like a nobody." He was homesick

for his family, and he often felt that everything he missed or held dear was under attack. "I'd

**A Buffalo with a lot of range, Russell can be dangerous when he works up a head of steam.**

sit in class with students who griped about the military and said that we didn't need one, that military people were just a bunch of war-mongers," Russell says. "In my heart, I'm thinking my dad and my brother—he's a Marine helicopter pilot—they're protecting the freedoms that these people love."

Near the end of the Vietnam War, Russell's father was gone for an entire year on a mission to Thailand. In '92 he spent four months in Somalia. From 1984 to '86 the family lived on a base in England that was under 24-hour armed guard for weeks because of the threat of terrorist attacks. It had been the launch point for the U.S. planes that carried out the '86 bombing of Libya. "I stayed home from school the day the planes came back," Matt says. "I watched out the window as the cars came down our street and the pilots' wives came running out their front doors, holding flowers."

Russell stuck it out in Boulder—he will graduate in December with a degree in communications—and when asked what made him stay, he says talking to his parents and Cabral was part of the reason. "Mostly," he says, "you go home and your friends are all gone. You realize your life has changed. Nothing is the same anymore. Looking back, I think I was just growing up."

Russell? Growing up? That may draw good-natured dissent from Cabral. Russell has an imagination straight out of Marvel Comics, and he excels at putting people on. "Wherever he is during practice, I'll notice a bunch of guys laughing," Cabral says. "So I say, 'C'mere.' Matt comes jogging over, and I send him to 'Time Out,' just like I used to do with my kids. I point to a spot and he has to go stand by himself for 10 minutes. It drives him crazy."

Russell's football skill always wins him Cabral's forgiveness. Last season he led the Buffaloes in tackles (119) and tackles for loss (16). He has a knack for turning in his best performances in big games:

a team-high 13 tackles against Nebraska last season; 12 tackles and two sacks in a 21-point romp over then No. 10 Oklahoma; 12 tackles in a 29-21 comeback win against then No. 3 Texas A&M.

Russell loves football and everything that goes with it. He often finds himself crying during games. "Tears just streaming down my face," he says. "I know it sounds weird. It's not tears from being upset. It's from being so excited. Knowing we are playing so hard for each other. I want to win so bad. It's that love and pride you have for your teammates, what I feel when we're down, or when it's real physical, or when it's a tight game. I guess it's like being a dad. You're just so proud."

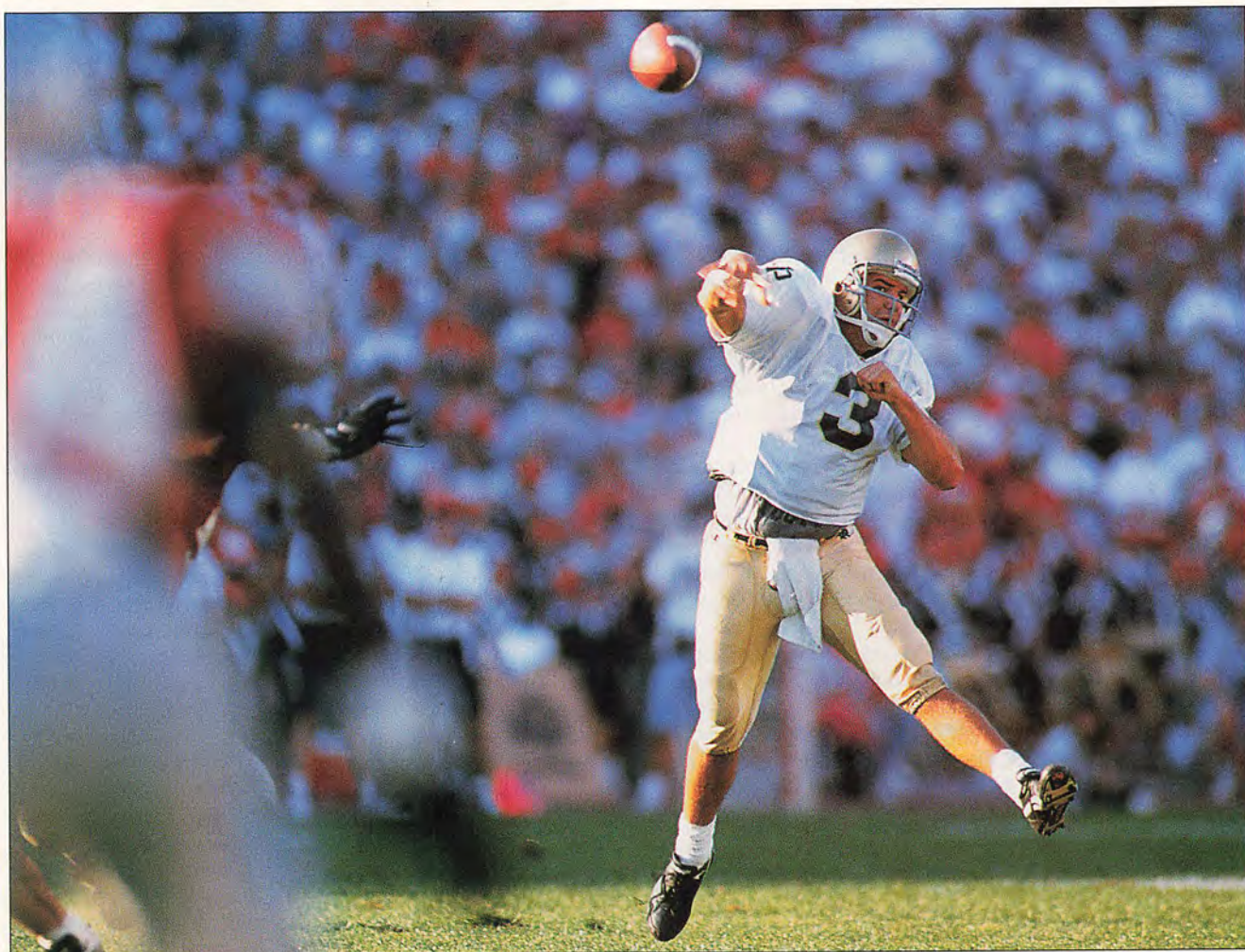
Russell says he would be honored to win an individual award like the Butkus, but he's most concerned with his team's pursuit of the national title. And he knows that will require ending Colorado's 0-4 streak against Big 12-rival Nebraska. "They beat us here last season," Russell says, gazing out over Folsom Field. "But this is a new year."

The bad news for the Cornhuskers, though, is he's the same old Matt Russell. ■



RONALD G. MODRA





## 5. NOTRE DAME

One day last spring Notre Dame football coach Lou Holtz decided to take a peek at the renovations in Notre Dame Stadium. It was the first time since the end of last season that Holtz had been in the 67-year-old facility, which is being enlarged to raise seating capacity from 59,075 to 80,990 by the start of the '97 campaign. The coach wanted to see the view from the last row. "I sat down in the top corner of the end zone," he says with a chuckle, "and I immediately started hollering, 'Throw it to the tight end! Throw it to the tight end!'"

The 59-year-old Holtz usually finds a way to laugh off the pressure that comes from coaching the college football program with the highest profile in the nation. Now in his 11th season in South Bend, Holtz was reminded just how fickle the Irish faithful can be when some fans called for his removal after last year's season-opening loss to Northwestern. The criticism waned as the Irish won their final six regular-season games and played well in a 31-26 loss to Florida State in the Orange Bowl, but the smoke from the sniping still lingers over the Golden Dome.

The good news for Holtz is that this year's squad might be good enough to return him to "Saint Lou" status. Quarterback Ron Powlus returns along with senior fullback Marc Edwards and the usual assortment of speedy tailbacks. Equally important, the Irish defensive line is deep, something it has not been the past two seasons. Says defensive coordinator Bob Davie, "We've got the per-

sonnel now to be an attack-style defense."

Even so, much of the focus will be on Powlus, who hasn't quite lived up to the expectations that greeted him when he arrived in South Bend three years ago. Powlus hasn't put up bad numbers (he needs only 11 touchdown passes to break Rick Mirer's school career record of 41), but he has been inconsistent and hampered by injuries. Last year he broke his left (nonthrowing) arm in the penultimate regular-season game, against Navy, and was still out for this year's spring drills.

Though Powlus could gain another year of eligibility because he missed all of his freshman year with a broken collarbone, he is on course to graduate in December and seems intent on testing NFL waters. Some Irish fans say this would be good for Holtz, because Powlus's drop-back passing skills don't suit the coach's smash-mouth offense. Holtz tried to open things up this spring with a four- and five-receiver spread formation, but a lack of good receivers undermined the plan. Holtz has another option, however. Sophomore quarterback Jarious Jackson, an option specialist, was impressive in running the first team during spring drills.

No matter who's calling the signals, Holtz surely feels the urgency to win. His '96 team is senior-laden, so after this season it might be a while before Notre Dame can talk about a national title again. If the Irish don't win now—and win big—Holtz can count on hearing about it from the fans in the top row.

**Powlus hasn't yet lived up to expectations, but he isn't throwing in the towel.**

—MARTY BURNS



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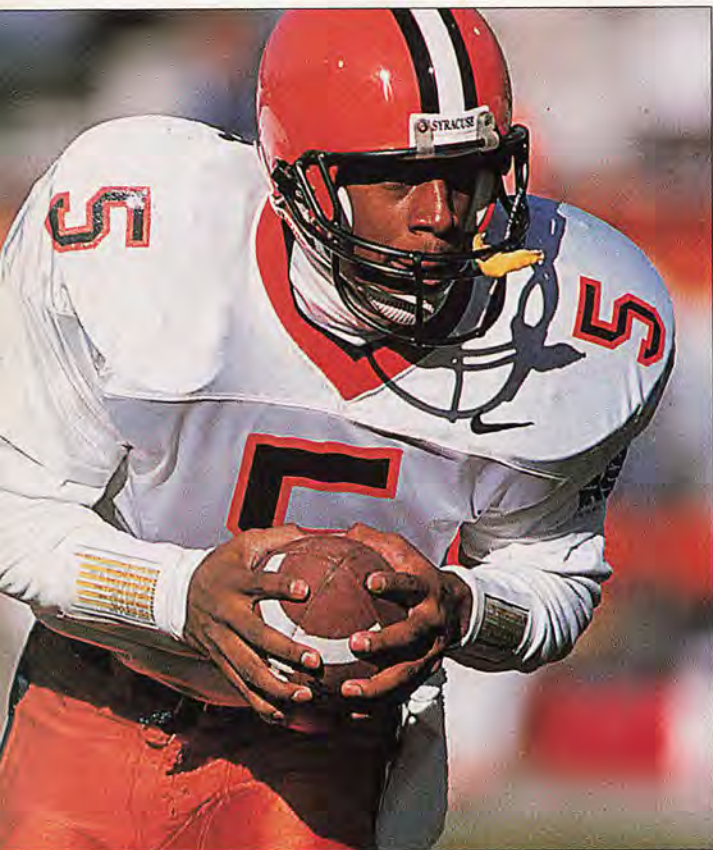
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## 6. SYRACUSE

Many of the recruiters who came to Chicago's Mount Carmel High in the fall of 1993 to evaluate quarterback Donovan McNabb saw the same qualities: size, speed and an arm so erratic that it might never power a college passing game. Nebraska was willing to take a chance on the speedy 6' 2", 213-pound quarterback; after all, Tommie Frazier didn't really learn to throw until he got to Lincoln. And Syracuse assistant coach George DeLeone saw something, too. "When the lights went on," says DeLeone, "this guy would play big."

Three years later, having decided Nebraska was too deep at quar-



**If McNabb's sophomore season is like his first, Syracuse should roll.**

terback for him, McNabb is entering his sophomore season at Syracuse (he redshirted in '94), and the lights are on. Boy, are they on. After the Orangemen finished 6-4-1 in 1993 and 7-4 in '94, they went 9-3 last fall, including a 41-0 starching of Clemson in the Gator Bowl. Fifteen starters are back, and Syracuse's principal Big East rivals, Virginia Tech and Miami, must visit the Carrier Dome this fall. "I feel very good about where we are right now," says Orangemen coach Paul Pasqualoni, a man who ordinarily treats high expectation as if it were a mug of sour milk.

It is McNabb, most of all, who gives Syracuse cause to make January plans. He didn't win the starting job last season until the week of the season opener, but once installed, McNabb, who was a reserve on the Syracuse basketball team that went to last spring's NCAA title game, blossomed into a multidimensional force perfect for running Syracuse's complex option offense. He threw for

1,991 yards and 16 touchdowns, with just six interceptions, and rushed for 261 yards and two more scores. "If you give him time, he'll make a big play; if you don't give him time, he'll still make a big play," says junior offensive tackle Brent Warren. "He's an offensive lineman's dream."

The same can be said of sophomore fullback Rob Konrad, who rushed for 433 yards and seven touchdowns as a true freshman last fall. The one gaping hole on offense is at wideout, a spot weakened by the departure of Marvin Harrison, who was drafted in the first round by the Indianapolis Colts. Kevin Johnson, a quarterback-turned-wide receiver, and true freshman Quinton Spotwood, will combine to replace Harrison.

Returning to a defense that ranked fourth in the Big East against the run is Antwaune Ponds, a 6' 1", 241-pound linebacker, Donovin Darius, a 6' 1", 206-pound free safety who is one of the biggest hitters in the conference, and senior cornerback Kevin Abrams, who is not only a sticky man-to-man defender but also a font of wisdom. Abrams was a redshirt in 1992, when the Orangemen were 10-2 and won the Fiesta Bowl. Expectations soared, but two disappointing seasons followed. "I've seen all the peaks and valleys," says Abrams. "You have to play every down. You have to earn it. Our goal last year was to get the program back where it used to be. We did that."

Well, expectations are high again. And the lights are on. Here is a team that can handle both. —T.L.

## 7. NORTHWESTERN

They have 13 starters back from a team that was 10-2, won the Big Ten and finished No. 7 in the country. They have a Heisman Trophy candidate at running back, a Butkus Award candidate at linebacker and, at quarterback, a fifth-year senior who threw just five interceptions last season. So why aren't more experts picking the Wildcats to return to the Rose Bowl? "It's that Cinderella thing, I guess," says senior safety Eric Collier.

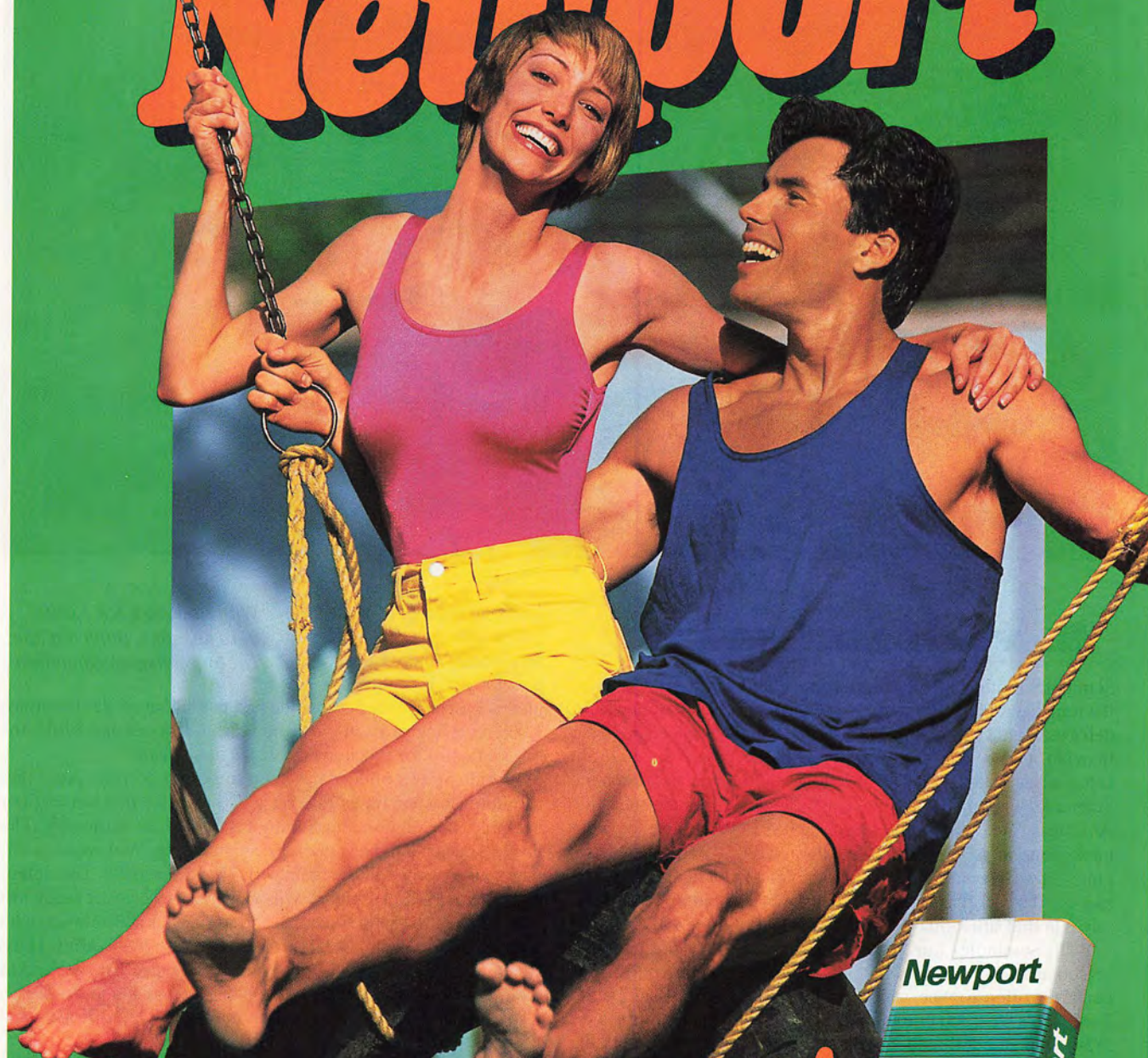
Yes, the Cinderella label continues to stick to the Wildcats eight months after their dream season ended in a hard-fought 41-32 loss to USC in Pasadena. If any other defending Big Ten champion had as many players returning as Northwestern does, it would probably be picked in the Top 10 by every prognosticator in the business; but most of the pundits have not placed the Wildcats above 15th. Why? Because Northwestern is Northwestern, which means the Wildcats will have to prove themselves all over again.

The Wildcats have one of the best running backs in the game in junior Darnell Autry, who rolled up 1,747 yards on the ground and finished fourth in Heisman voting last season. They also have senior inside linebacker Pat Fitzgerald, who was Big Ten defensive player of the year, and senior quarterback Steve Schnur, who hardly ever makes a mistake. Then there's senior punter Paul Burton, who had a 90-yard boot against Indiana last year, and junior wideout D'Wayne Bates, a game-breaker with speed. Northwestern does have to plug a few holes: Junior fullback Matt Hartl was found to have Hodgkin's disease and will not play. There are two new starters on the offensive line, and the defensive secondary is inexperienced—Collier is the only returning starter.

The skeptics say that everything went right for Northwestern last year, and they are correct when they say that the Wildcats' opponents will be focused on knocking them down a peg this season. "We hear that one-year-wonder stuff, but it really doesn't bother us," says Fitzgerald, who has recovered from the broken left leg that kept him out of the Rose Bowl. "We know it's going to be a lot tougher this year. But we also know we didn't use smoke and mirrors to beat people last year." —M.B.



# Newport



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## 8. FLORIDA STATE

Seminoles football has become as predictable and monotonous as the tomahawk chop. For nine consecutive years coach Bobby Bowden's teams have won at least 10 games and been ranked no lower than No. 4 in the final polls—both NCAA Division I-A records. In fact, Florida State fans are so accustomed to winning that when the Seminoles were upset by Virginia 33–28 last November, their first ACC loss since joining the league in 1991, all Tallahassee went into a frenzy of hand-wringing. What was wrong? Was Bowden slipping? “If we lose one game, we disappoint a lot of people,” says junior quarterback Thad Busby. “That’s not right, but we’ve put ourselves in that situation by having such great seasons and records.”

Well, Seminoles fans, prepare yourselves for another great season and record. About the only real area of concern for Bowden is the offensive line, which lost three starters. But senior Todd Fordham, a 6' 5", 300-pound tackle, and senior Chad Bates, a 6' 3", 285-pound guard, should provide stability and leadership until the newcomers come around.

If the line jells, the Seminoles' offense, which led Division I-A last season with an average of 574.5 yards per game, will be its usual overpowering self. The running attack will showcase senior tailback Warwick Dunn, the 5' 9", 185-pound slasher who averaged 7.5 yards per carry last fall (second in Division I-A) and became the first Seminoles runner to rush two seasons for at least 1,000 yards.

At quarterback Busby will be the fourth consecutive Florida State starter who didn't take over the job until his junior year (the others were Casey Weldon, Charlie Ward and Danny Kanell). When the 6' 3", 215-pounder filled in for Kanell last season, he played well, completing 11 of 13 passes against Maryland and throwing for 156

yards against N.C. State. His primary receivers will be wideouts Andre Cooper, a senior, and E.G. Green, a

junior. Last year they became the first pair of Seminoles to surpass 1,000 receiving yards in the same season. Cooper also broke the school record for touchdown catches in a season.

Florida State's offense has been so potent over the years that the defense sometimes doesn't get the credit it deserves. For example, last season the Seminoles forced 34 turnovers. The line will be anchored by junior noseguard Andre Wadsworth, a former walk-on who led the team with 77 tackles in '95. The defensive ends are senior Reinard Wilson, who has 22 career sacks, just four short of the school record, and junior Peter Boulware, who led the ACC in sacks last fall with 10. The best linebacker is Daryl Bush, who was the only sophomore semifinalist for the Butkus Award last year. All four starters from the secondary return—Byron Capers, Sean Hamlet, Robert Hammond and Samari Rolle—and there are strong backups at every position.

Another 10-win season looks very possible, but the Seminoles are shooting even higher. Says Busby, “The only thing we haven't done since I've been here is have an undefeated season.” Now *that* might impress people in Tallahassee. —WILLIAM F. REED

**With back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons, Dunn has the cut of a Heisman candidate.**

## 9. USC

Quarterback Brad Otton estimates that during a two-year stint in the early '90s as a Mormon missionary in Italy, he converted one individual. With a sheepish grin he then corrects himself. “Well, that's what I sometimes tell people,” he says. “Actually I don't know that I ever converted anyone.”



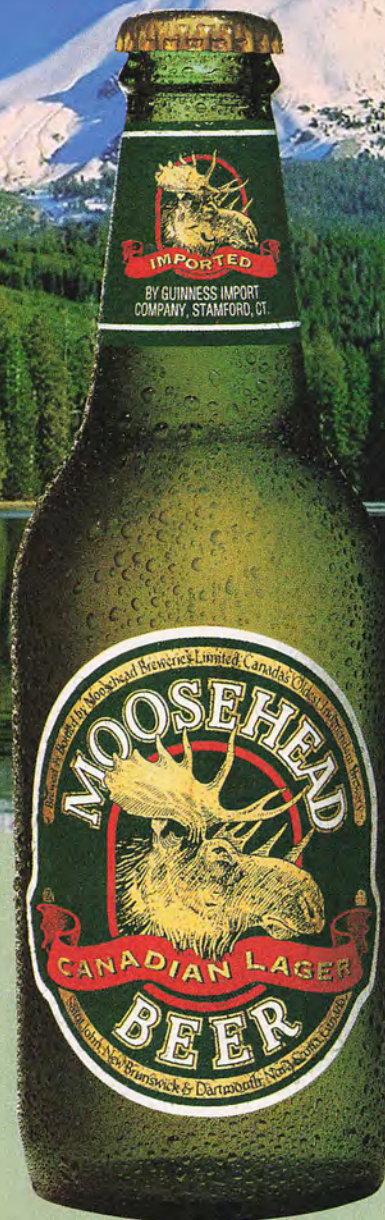
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**Southern Cal's strength is on D, but the offensive line could run into trouble.**

391-yard performance in the Trojans' 41-32 win over Northwestern in the Rose Bowl, Otton convinced many that he was one of the nation's top quarterbacks. That game came at the end of a sometimes frustrating season in which he split time with Kyle Wacholtz, who has used up his eligibility. Says Otton, "The sad thing was that every time one of us made a mistake, people instinctively thought, Get the other guy in there."

Otton needn't worry anymore; he is the clear-cut starter this season. Whether the Trojans return to Pasadena, however, depends on how quickly the rest of the offense develops. USC is deep at running back. Senior Shawn Walters, who rushed for 976 yards as a sophomore, is serving a yearlong suspension for accepting money from an agent and won't return until the Trojans' fourth game. When he does, he'll have a hard time cracking the starting lineup. Delon Washington, now a junior, filled in last year by rushing for 1,109 yards.

The offensive line, however, is not so deep. Coach John Robinson must replace all five starters from last year. True freshman Travis Claridge may even start in the season opener. The Trojans must also deal with the loss of All-Everything wideout Keyshawn Johnson (102 catches, 1,434 yards in '95), the No. 1 pick in last April's NFL draft. While the returning receiving trio of Chris Miller, Billy Miller and Larry Parker combined for 49 catches and 512

On the football field the fifth-year senior has been far more persuasive. With his rousing 29-for-44,

the ball last season," said Dahlquist of the pair, who hooked up 52 times for 836 yards. "We are at our best when we spread the ball around."

Brown, who despite several injuries was the SWC's offensive MVP with 2,583 total yards and 20 touchdowns, spent half the season lobbing the ball deep to Adams, regardless of the coverage. He eventually learned to appreciate the "other guys" on offense.

The other guys carried the offensive load late last season when a painful shoulder injury limited Brown's ability to throw the bomb. During a crucial 6-0 streak that propelled Texas to the final Southwest Conference title, running back Shon Mitchell had four consecutive 100-yard performances, and Ricky Williams had three. They combined for 2,089 yards and 18 touchdowns for the season. Williams's 990 yards broke Earl Campbell's freshman rushing record, earning him the nickname Little Earl.

Texas needs another explosive year of offense to succeed in the rugged Big 12. The Longhorns have lost four starters from the defensive front seven—including All-America end Tony Brackens—and that is from a unit that ranked 55th in the nation in yardage allowed and gave up 100 or more yards to nine runners. Mere mention of these defensive holes is enough to bring back nightmares for members of the Longhorns' offense. Says Williams, "Last season it seemed like every running back we played against had 100 yards against us. Sometimes we felt like we had to score every time we had the ball."

That burden remains in '96. But this offense may be up to the task.

—RICHARD DEUTSCH

## 10. TEXAS

Longhorns offensive coordinator Gene Dahlquist hopes he doesn't have to drive a wedge between junior quarterback James Brown and senior wideout Mike Adams—the most dangerous passing combination in school history. "James was aware of Mike's abilities and tried a little too hard to get him



## 11. KANSAS STATE

The scariest moment of the 1995 season for the Wildcats didn't take place on the field. It occurred in the locker room just before the kickoff of the Holiday Bowl in San Diego. Though coach Bill Snyder had just completed his pregame speech, the players were still moping around staring at their cleats. Snyder was nervous, and the players were worried. Suddenly sophomore cornerback Chris Canty stood up and launched into an uncanny, histrionic impersonation of Snyder. Arms flailing, voice cracking, Canty had Snyder's voice and gestures down cold. When he was done, the locker room hung in a dead calm.

"We were stunned," says senior Joe Gordon, a fellow cornerback who is accustomed to playing second banana to Canty, an AP All-America and a finalist for the Jim Thorpe Award. "Everybody looked around to see what to do, and all of a sudden Coach Snyder started laughing, then we all started laughing." Snyder clapped his hands and sent his team onto the field, where it whipped Colorado State 54-21 and finished 10-2, ranked seventh in the country. Now, with two bowl victories and a 32-4-1 home record during the '90s, Kansas State rides into the Big 12 on a wave of optimism.

Junior quarterback Brian Kavanagh, who completed 18 of 24 passes for 242 yards and four TDs after replacing injured starter Matt Miller in the Holiday Bowl, will lead the offense. The Wildcats have only one starting receiver back, but he is senior wideout

Kevin Lockett, who led the Big Eight with 56 catches for 797 yards and a school-record 13 touchdowns. An-

**Mike Lawrence (20) and Kansas State leaped to No. 7 in '95—now the encore.**

other returnee, though new to the wideout spot, is Canty, who will likely see some snaps on offense this season. The veteran interior line, featuring senior center Jason Johnson (6' 3", 275 pounds) and guards Kendyl Jacox, a 6' 2", 320-pound junior, and Ross Greenwood, a 6' 4", 300-pound senior, should match up well with the other big boys of the Big 12.

There are six starters back on a defensive unit that led the nation in total defense (250.8 yards per game) and held six opponents to seven points or less. Up front, senior end Nyle Wiren (eight sacks in '95) pairs with Big Eight defensive freshman of the year, linebacker Travis Ochs, who made 73 tackles last fall.

Led by Canty, Gordon and safety Mario Smith, the Holiday Bowl defensive MVP, the backfield may be the best in college football. Gordon allowed 12 completions in 332 man-coverage situations last season, and Canty's eight interceptions tied him for tops in the nation. "I'm the admiral keeping the ship steady," says Gordon, "while Canty rocks the boat. He's the joker, a real comedian."

That's not to say that any levity will be needed in the locker room of some bowl game this season. The Wildcats are starting to feel right at home there.

—D.F.

## 12. LSU

This spring when junior defensive tackle Chuck Wiley dubbed the Tigers' front four the Four Horsemen, he was not paying homage to Notre Dame's legendary backfield, whom he had never heard of, but to a tag-team quartet of professional wrestlers—led by Wiley's favorite grappler, Ric (the Nature Boy) Flair—who also use that nickname.

"Yeah, I guess you could say we're real big wrestling fans," says





Wiley, speaking for himself and his linemates. "We watch the Nature Boy a lot. He's not the biggest guy in the ring, but he's in control. Everyone is intimidated by him. The Nature Boy is the man."

The 6' 4", 274-pound Wiley is the man for the Tigers this season. With the loss of ends Gabe Northern and James Gillyard, who combined for 15 sacks last year, Wiley will be the leader of a defense that ranked sixth in the country in points allowed (14.5 per game) last fall. "You can't say we'll sack the quarterback as often with our defensive ends when we've lost guys like Northern and Gillyard," says coach Gerry DiNardo. "But we'll find another way."

That other way involves Wiley, a second-team All-SEC pick (seven sacks last season), and right tackle Anthony McFarland, an SEC freshman defensive player of the year in '95. The other two Horsemen are junior Kenny Mixon and sophomore Arnold Miller, who combined for 25 tackles and three sacks last season. Senior linebacker Allen Stansberry, the team's leading tackler last fall, will be cleaning up behind the Horsemen.

On offense LSU has eight starters back, including a pair of stellar sophomores: quarterback Herb Tyler and tailback Kevin Faulk. Tyler was 4-0 in games he started in '95, including a 45-26 win over Michigan State in the Independence Bowl, which topped a 7-4-1 season. Faulk, the SEC offensive freshman of the year, rushed for 852 yards in the regular season, then shredded the Spartans for 234 yards on 25 carries.

"Our attitude is, we want to go after everyone, even the big dogs," says Wiley, as if hyping a caged death match. LSU should contend seriously for a spot in the SEC Championship Game, and for the first time in a decade the Tigers may be the big dogs.

—MARK BECHTEL

## 13. PENN STATE

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to track down all available information on Penn State's football team, starting with sophomore running back Curtis Enis. This will not be an easy assignment. Although Enis played in front of 94,000 people at Beaver Stadium, he was forbidden by Penn State freshman rules to speak to the media. So information is scarce on the 19-year-old who gained 955 all-purpose yards with an eye-popping 6.0 yards per carry.

This we do know: The 6' 3", 230-pound back is from Union City, Ohio, and he earned the state's Mr. Football award after rushing for 2,764 yards and scoring 39 touchdowns as a senior at Mississinawa Valley High in 1993. The following year, after failing to score the NCAA-required 17 on his ACT, he attended Kiski Prep in Saltsburg, Pa.

Enis actually made four tackles as a Nittany Lions linebacker before switching to tailback, where he became the first true freshman to lead Penn State in rushing since D.J. Dozier in 1983. En route to being named the co-Big Ten freshman of the year, he drew comparisons to former Penn State running back Kijana Carter, now with the Cincinnati Bengals. After Enis gained 132 yards on 14 carries in the second half against Temple, Penn State coach Joe Paterno relaxed his rules, allowing Enis one chance to meet the media. Alas, Enis would disclose only that he had a lot to learn. So he, like most of Penn State's young and inexperienced offense this year, remains something of a mystery.

Senior quarterback Wally Richardson is a different story. He led Penn State to four fourth-quarter comebacks and capped 1995 with an Outback Bowl—record four TD passes as the Nittany Lions finished 9-3 and ranked 12th in the nation. Senior tight end Keith

# IT DOESN'T GET ANY BIGGER THAN THIS.





Olsommer is the only receiver with more than 13 catches in '95 who will be back. And 6' 2", 290-pound senior center Barry Tielsch is the lone returning starter on the line—one reason why another run at the Rose Bowl may be impossible for the Lions. "I think we have to just about start over," says Paterno. "Particularly on offense."

Not so on defense, where nine starters return to a unit that finished fourth in the Big Ten against the rush (128.2 yards per game) in 1995. Joining the front line will be 6' 5", 330-pound sophomore tackle Floyd Wedderburn, who missed all of last season with a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee. Former walk-on Gerald Filardi is back at inside linebacker after averaging 10.2 tackles per game during his junior year. Two-time All-Big Ten senior cornerback Brian Miller, who led the team with five interceptions and the league with 19 pass breakups, is one of 10 returning lettermen in the secondary.

With that kind of talent on defense, the Nittany Lions shouldn't self-destruct in '96, even if the young offense struggles. —D.F.

## **14. TEXAS A&M**

Ed Jasper loves talking about his hometown. "I came from Troup, Texas, population 1,659," he says. "The biggest restaurant we have there is the Dairy Queen. You have to drive 20 miles to the movies. Then again, I couldn't date anyone there because we're all kinfolk." Indeed, Jasper, who is entering his third season as Texas A&M's starting noseguard, is so identified with the place that he is identified by it—Troup has become his nickname. "A lot of the freshmen don't even know my real name," he says. "I like it all right. Every time I hear it, it reminds me where I came from."

Of course, no one in College Station would dare call Jasper a name he didn't like. A burly 6' 4", 302 pounds, Jasper is the anchor of one of the nation's most fearsome defensive front sevens, and he has very specific notions about how to assert his dominance, whether it be over an opposing lineman or an unwitting teammate. "He's a big bully," says senior inside linebacker Larry Walker. "When I was a freshman, I used to walk into his room, and he'd just hit me as hard as he could. I hated him for a while."

Walker got over it, but opposing linemen haven't been so lucky. Last season Jasper set a single-season school record with 14 tackles for a loss. And though he finished the year with only 53 tackles, the double and triple teams he attracted created opportunities for pass rushers like linebacker Keith Mitchell, whose 13 sacks were fifth-best in the nation.

Outside linebacker Reggie Brown, selected 17th overall by the Detroit Lions, was the only starter to depart from last season's front seven. Considering that A&M had the nation's third-ranked defense last year, that bodes well for '96.

The offense will be hurt by the loss of tailback Leeland McElroy but will recover much faster if new quarterback Brannndon Stewart (*page 82*), the highly touted transfer from Tennessee, lives up to expectations. In addition, the team will need to erase memories of last year's 9-3 season, which, until the 22-20 Alamo Bowl victory over Michigan, never fulfilled the high hopes with which it began.

That's where Jasper's leadership will be needed most. "It got to the point last year where we were all blaming each other," he says. "We weren't laughing, we weren't having fun, we weren't close enough. That's going to change this year."

—SETH DAVIS

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# Fresh Start

*Former Tennessee quarterback Brannndon Stewart is back in his home state, at Texas A&M, and this time there's no confusion about who's running the show*

**by Kelli Anderson**

THE LITTLE boy walked across the pasture with his usual purposeful gait, his face slightly crumpled but his eyes dry. The tears wouldn't come even after he reached his mother and made his horrifying announcement: "Mom, I've been shot."

It had been an accident; a young friend had pumped too much air into a pellet gun and then, unaware the thing was loaded, shot it right at nine-year-old Brannndon Stewart's back, burying a pellet deep into the muscle. So Brannndon had walked across the field to his parents' farmhouse in Stephenville, Texas, to let his mom know. Vickie Stewart's knees weakened when she saw the bloody hole in her son's back, but he remained as serene as a stalk of wheat. "Look, Mom, it's no big deal," he said. "We just need to go to the hospital and get it taken out. It'll be all right."

Twelve years later you can still say this about Brannndon Stewart, the 6' 3", 214-pound junior quarterback who will step into the pocket for Texas A&M this season: The guy doesn't flinch easily. The most famous recent example of this occurred in February 1994 after Stewart had led Stephenville High, a school with a tradition of football mediocrity, to a 16-0 record and the Texas 4A title. Stewart's 1,516 rushing yards and 2,558 passing yards accounted for more than half of Stephenville's offense, the third-most productive offense in high school football history. Stewart was a consensus All-America and the hottest quarterback prospect in the Southwest. Nebraska wanted him. So did Florida State and Texas A&M. But Stewart signed with Tennessee, even though he knew that Peyton Manning, another prized quarterback recruit and the son of Southern college football icon Archie Manning, was about to do the same.

In retrospect, it seems like an extraordinarily brassy thing for

Stewart to have done, given Manning's skills, pedigree and lifelong preparation for college football. But Stewart had some notable attributes of his own, not the least of which was a mobility that made him a more exciting, Archie-type scrambler than Peyton. Most important, at least from Stewart's standpoint: Tennessee coach Philip Fulmer assured him that he and Manning would get equal shots at the starting quarterback's job when their time came.

However, soon after the Vols' first- and second-string quarterbacks, Jerry Colquitt and Todd Helton, were injured early in Manning and Stewart's freshman season of 1994, it became clear that Manning, who had displayed a quick grasp of the Tennessee offense, would get his equal shot first. Against Mississippi State in Starkville, Manning stepped in for Helton and played well, while Stewart saw action in only two series. Against Alabama three weeks later, Stewart took over for a faltering Manning in the last series of the first half, passed for 40 yards and positioned the Volunteers for a tying field goal. Despite that performance Stewart got no snaps in the second half. Instead, he stood silently on the sideline, helmet on and arms crossed as the Manning-led Vols fell 17-13.

"I've never seen him more upset than he was at that game," says







PHIL HUBER

**Stewart prefers the option of starting for the Aggies to that of being a Vols backup.**

or what the coaches had promised him. Peyton was going to be the guy."

Stewart appeared in 11 of 12 games that season, completing 34 of 55 passes for 424 yards and one touchdown, with two interceptions. (Manning completed 89 of 144 for 1,141 yards and 11 TDs, with six interceptions.) Disillusioned, Stewart asked to be released from his scholarship, and he transferred to Texas A&M for the spring semester of 1995.

"At Tennessee they said, 'You guys will have an equal shot,' but it turned out to be a little different," says Stewart. "They weren't able to make it equal. They were not able to make two people happy. Obviously coaches have to make a decision on a guy and stick with it. But the press was making it like I was in a fight with Peyton, and I wasn't comfortable with that. I just wanted to play."

The price of Stewart's transfer was high: a year of sitting out and, because he left in the middle of the school year, a year of lost

Brannan's father, Redge. "It was becoming more and more clear that it didn't matter what Brannan did

eligibility. But he has been compensated by the welcome he has received in College Station, which has been enthusiastic, to say the least. "I was really disappointed Brannan didn't come here originally, but I am thrilled to finally get him," says A&M coach R.C. Slocum. "It would have made so much sense for him to come here in the first place. He already had a growing reputation in the state."

Not that Stewart's Tennessee detour did much to curtail that growth. Though Stewart hasn't played a game in almost two years, his legend has blossomed in the extremely fertile soil of A&M football expectations. Last year when senior quarterback Corey Pulfli was struggling, some Aggie fans in the stands screamed for Stewart, even though he wasn't eligible. And the faithful who swarm around Slocum at alumni functions all want to know the same thing: Is Stewart as good as everyone says he is? "I have to tell them, 'No, he's probably not,'" says Slocum, "but so far I've been impressed."

Even in the face of expectations so great that, Slocum says, Stewart would have to be "10 feet tall and throw only bullets" to fulfill them, the quarterback doesn't tremble. "That stuff doesn't really affect me," he says. "I try not to read the papers, and I never believe what people say anyway. I know what I'm capable of."

Stewart seemed preternaturally self-possessed even as a child. "He was always bigger and seemed older than other kids his age," says his mother. "At age six he was reaching such sensible decisions that he'd make me feel immature by comparison."

Because he didn't watch much TV—he preferred to hunt or play outdoors—Brannan had no sports idols. He decorated his room with Baylor paraphernalia only because green was his favorite color. But he was athletic and extremely competitive, particularly with his sister, Tiffany, who is four years older and liked to make taunting challenges that Brannan couldn't resist. "I remember once she brought home a bronze medal she'd won at the state track meet," says Stewart. "She dangled it in front of me and said, 'You'll never win one of these.' But I won one in football. And mine was gold."

Stewart prefers to make unspoken challenges, and these have already had an impact on many of his Aggie teammates. His achievements in the weight room, for example, have spurred more than a few linemen to make gut checks. Stewart, who was a competitive powerlifter in high school, has already broken the squat record for Aggie quarterbacks, with 450 pounds, and his 341-pound power clean is just 16 shy of another record. "There's nothing like the prospect of being outlifted by the quarterback to get a lineman working," says strength coach Mike Clark.

Aggie defensive players probably owe Stewart something too. While running the scout team last season, Stewart so severely tested A&M's vaunted Wrecking Crew that before the Aggies' game against Houston last October, A&M defensive coordinator Phil Bennett told another Aggie coach that he feared his unit, which had been getting shredded in practice, would not contain the Cougars' offense. But after A&M mulched Houston 31-7, Bennett understood his miscalculation. "One major difference," he said, was that "Houston doesn't have Brannan Stewart."

"If you were to draw a picture of the perfect quarterback, it'd be Brannan," says the Aggies' junior kicker, Kyle Bryant, one of Stewart's housemates. "He's got all the physical and mental ability, plus he's a great leader. And he's such a low-key guy, you can't help but be friends with him. I mean, the guy never gets mad! He'll just take a breath and say, 'Whatever.' And he's a pretty good cook."

Make that barbecuer, since grilled meat seems to be the entrée of choice just about every night at the house Stewart and Bryant share with two teammates. "I'm pretty good at steaks and ribs," says Stewart. "But I haven't really attempted anything like, say, quiche."

Baking a quiche? It's a prospect that might make even the bravest among us quail. ■





## 15. MICHIGAN

When Michigan linebacker Jarrett Irons was five years old, he said to his father with a matter-of-factness beyond his years, "Dad, I want to have a conversation with you."

Young Jarrett wondered why his father, Gerald Irons, then in his second season as a Cleveland Browns captain and his eighth in the NFL, spent so much of the off-season studying. You're happy playing football, Jarrett said, and it's your job, so why are you still going to school? "He was amazingly grown-up," recalls Gerald, who earned an MBA from the University of Chicago in 1976 and then went on to study law. "I explained to him that football was only one part of life, and that I had a responsibility to myself and those around me to grow outside of it. He listened very attentively."

And, clearly, Jarrett absorbed his father's words. The unquestioned leader of the Michigan defense and one of the five top linebackers in the nation, Irons is revered by his teammates as a sideline sage. Having finished his undergraduate studies in four years, Irons is using his fifth year to take master's classes in facility planning. And it is as much for being a savvy leader as it is for his ferocious tackling that Irons will be the eighth player in 120 years to serve two seasons as a Michigan captain. "He's our most important and influential presence," says defensive coordinator Greg Mattison. "He plays smart, and he plays with joy."

The love for football was bequeathed not only by Gerald, but by Jarrett's mother, Myrna, who has often given Jarrett pregame admonitions to "knock somebody's head off." He did that regularly as a football captain at McCulloch High in The Woodlands, Texas, and so captivated hometown fans that after he left for Michigan, locals talked his parents into issuing a bimonthly Jar-

**Shaw's numbers are the best in Iowa history, but he still has trouble shaking doubters.**

rett Irons Newsletter. Some 150 Irons supporters attended Michigan's 22-20 loss to Texas A&M in the Alamo Bowl at San Antonio last December, hanging a banner that read: #37 IRONS: FLATTENS AND FOLDS. Though flu-ridden, Irons was named defensive player of the game. "I liked that pressure," says the 6' 1", 231-pounder. "And I love the responsibility of being a Michigan captain. I came back [for a fifth season] because I want to help take us to the Rose Bowl."

If the Wolverines get to the Granddaddy, it will be due to a dominating defense. Physically intimidating inside linebackers Rob Swett and Sam Sword round out one of the best linebacking corps in the country. Although senior defensive back Clarence Thompson is academically ineligible, cornerback Charles Woodson (last year's co-Big Ten freshman of the year) is an All-America candidate.

Offensively, the departure of tailback Tim Biakabutuka and most of last year's other offensive stars leaves an unproven cast of backs and re-

ceivers that will rely heavily upon cocksure sophomore quarterback Scott Dreisbach. It was Dreisbach who, in his first college game, orchestrated Michigan's best-ever comeback (an 18-17 last-play win over Virginia). And though he missed the final eight games of '95 with torn ligaments in his right thumb (Michigan was 4-0 behind Dreisbach, 4-4 the rest of the way), he returned to have a superb spring practice. "There's been a lot of changes on offense," says second-year coach Lloyd Carr. "But I'm not worried if there's pressure on Scott. He's the type of player who leads by meeting challenges."

Which gives Michigan two of that type. —KOSTYA KENNEDY

## 16. IOWA

You would think Sedrick Shaw might have a little job security by now. He has, after all, carried the football more times (613) and for more yardage (3,040) than anyone in Hawkeyes history. A soft-spoken senior, Shaw is smart and disciplined, and has a knack for taking the measure of a defense, then slicing it apart with his 4.3 speed. He is coming off a school-record 1,477-yard season, yet coach Hayden Fry not only refuses to lobby for Shaw as a Heisman Trophy candidate but also says things like, "If Sedrick isn't great, he'll be beaten out by Tavian Banks."

Maybe Fry talks that way to keep Shaw on his toes. Maybe he says it because Banks is that good. Limited by a broken wrist, Banks had only 66 carries last season as a sophomore but averaged 6.1 yards per rush. Now he's healthy and could be the fastest man on the Iowa offense ("Either him or [receiver] Tim Dwight," says Fry, "depending on who has the football").

And if that's not enough for Shaw to contend with, consider true freshman tailback Rob Thein, an Iowa City native who insinuat-

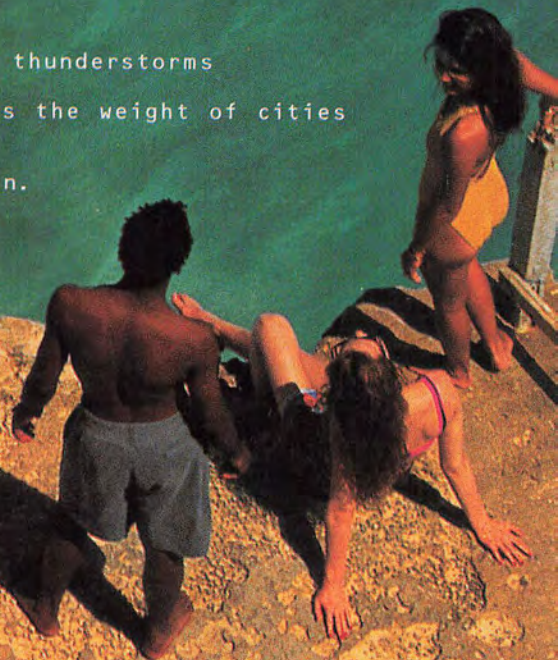


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## It will be hard for June Henley and Kansas to catch foes off guard this year.

performance in the intrasquad game sent the Iowa faithful into a frenzy and led junior quarterback Matt Sherman to dub them "the new mayor of Iowa City."

Certainly Sherman, who finished 17th in the nation in passing efficiency last season, can take comfort in the depth of talent at the skill positions around him. Looking wide he'll again find Iowa's two most explosive receivers from last season, Dwight and the magisterially named Demos Odems III. The X-factor is the revamped offensive line, which has three new starters. "There's a lot of self-imposed pressure," says offensive line coach Frank Verducci, "because we know we can make the difference."

With 14 returning starters and the lingering satisfaction of the three-game winning streak that closed last season, the Hawkeyes bolstered their confidence further with a well-oiled spring. The words *Rose Bowl* have begun popping up on the practice field, along with an excitement that Fry is doing his best to keep in check. The coach knows—as does Sedrick Shaw—that there are no guarantees.

—K.K.

## 17. MIAMI

When Miami quarterback Ryan Clement took over for injured starter Ryan Collins midway through the Virginia Tech game last September, Clement's grandmother Dorothy couldn't bear to watch. After seeing her grandson absorb one particularly gruesome shot, she sought refuge in the ladies' room of Blacksburg Stadium, where her daughter Jan stopped by to provide periodic updates. Following the game, a 13-7 Miami loss, Dorothy approached her grandson and in a firm voice said, "Now, you tell that

ed himself into the Hawkeyes' immediate plans with a fabulous spring. His 141-yard, three-touchdown

Ryan Collins to get better real fast." Only much later did she summon the courage to watch her grandson play again. "As the season went on, I got hit less," says Clement. "She'd watch me on TV."

Once hideous to behold, the Hurricanes, too, again appear safe for public viewing. After losing three of its first four games for the first time since 1976, Miami won its final seven games, including a 35-24 defeat of a very good Syracuse team in its season finale. With its favorable schedule and the return of 17 starters—including 10 on defense—Miami should vie for a place in a New Year's Day bowl game.

That the Hurricanes finished so strongly last fall is a testament to coach Butch Davis and his staff, who somehow cobbled together an eight-win season with a roster that was decimated by injuries. Thirty-six different players started for the Hurricanes last fall, and several others gained valuable game experience that they would not have gotten under less dire circumstances. One of those players was Clement, who completed 59.2% of his passes and threw for 1,638 yards and seven touchdowns, figures that compare favorably with the second-year numbers of former Hurricane quarterbacks Vinny Testaverde, Craig Erickson and Gino Torretta.

Clement will play behind an experienced line anchored by the one of the country's top centers, K.C. Jones, whom Davis compares with standout Houston Oilers center Mark Stepnoski. And after a slow start in the season opener, running back Danyell Ferguson (1,069 yards) flourished in Davis's two-back set. He may have

to be that productive again because Clement will have few experienced passing targets. All-Big East wideout Jammi German was suspended for the year for his role in the June assault of Miami track captain Maxwell Voce. (German has pleaded not guilty.)

During the summer Davis suspended four other players indefinitely for various offenses. Even so, it's possible none of them will miss more than the season's first month, during which Miami plays Memphis, The Citadel, Rutgers and Pitt (combined '95 record: 11-33). With home games against Florida State and Virginia Tech and a lone tough road game at Syracuse, anything less than 9-2 come Dec. 1 seems unlikely. That alone, however, will not satisfy Davis. "I'm convinced we can win at Miami, but we're going to do it the right way," he says. "As long as there are problems off the field, you aren't going to be recognized for how good you are on the field."

—C.S.

## 18. KANSAS

The organizers of the X Games might be wise to add Jayhawk Football to their extreme-sports event. In the nine months since Kansas last played a home game, the Jayhawks program has lived life on the edge.

It all started in December when head coach Glen Mason, the Big Eight's coach of the year after a surprising 10-2 finish and a No. 9 final ranking, announced he was leaving for Georgia, then changed his mind a week later. But things were just getting interesting. The Jayhawks' annual quarterback shuffle was interrupted when Ben Rutz tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee in spring drills. (As a freshman at Nebraska in 1993, Rutz tore the ACL in his right knee.) He resumed workouts with his Kansas teammates earlier this month and is expected to start in the season opener. If he can't go, the Jayhawks will have to use inexperienced



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14	12	Martin, C. NE RB	2	163
15	13	Mitchell, S. Det QB	2	255
16	14	San Francisco 49ers D	2	-56



junior Matt Johner to control an offense that averaged only 186 passing yards per game last season.

Meanwhile, Isaac Byrd, who led Kansas receivers with 48 catches for 604 yards and Jayhawks batters with a .321 average, kept the football staff in knots by waiting until late June before deciding to pass on a full-time pro baseball career.

The worst may be yet to come, though. As a final element of danger, Kansas warms up for back-to-back games against Colorado and Nebraska in October by going 43 days between its first two home games.

Now that's extreme, dude.

—R.D.

## 19. VIRGINIA

On Thursday, Nov. 2, 1995, Virginia upset second-ranked Florida State 33-28, but that wasn't the most shocking news of the week. The truly shocking news broke the next day when a photo editor rushed breathlessly into the newsroom of the school paper, *The Cavalier Daily*. Stop the presses! Exclusive! He had it right there on film: Coach George Welsh was . . . smiling!

It wasn't much of a reaction, really, considering that the upset of the Seminoles was one of the biggest victories in school history. Eyes wide, mere millimeters of teeth unveiled beneath his sharp nose—there was some question whether it was even a smile. Maybe he was just startled by the photographer's flash. Maybe someone stomped on his foot during the postgame celebration. Still, the paper decided to play the picture big for its readers, who are still getting used to their beloved Cavaliers' new status as media darlings. Well, get used to it, folks. Virginia, led by the winningest

coach in its history, will inspire even more grins this year.

Before Welsh arrived from Navy in 1982, Virginia, with two

**With Lethridge at the controls, Tech will be potent in the Big 12.**

winning seasons in 29 years, typically gave student journalists experience covering the loser's locker room. Then, just as he had done in Annapolis—where in nine seasons he became the Midshipmen's alltime wins leader (55-46-1)—Welsh imposed his will on Charlottesville. He instilled a gritty work ethic and, most of all, composure. Step by step he led the Cavaliers to their first bowl game, their first conference championship and, in 1990, a stint as the No. 1 team in the nation. Just like that, Virginia football had tradition.

With 13 returning starters from a 9-4 team (the four losses were by a total of 14 points), the Cavaliers are not only primed to defend the ACC title they shared with Florida State last fall but also have their sights set on a Top 10 finish.

The defense features one of the strongest linebacking corps in the ACC, anchored by seniors James Farrior and Jamie Sharper, but the secondary is young. At quarterback Virginia has to settle on either senior Tim Sherman, the backup last year, or promising sophomore Aaron Brooks. Either way, the quarterback's primary job is to get the ball to senior running back Tiki Barber, a Heisman Trophy candidate who holds school records for single-season rushing (1,397) and all-purpose yardage (1,906).

Naturally, Welsh is concerned, though he has plenty of talent to work with. Even if fortune has been smiling on Scott Stadium during his era, don't bet on him showing off his dimples again any time soon.

—EVAN KANEW

## 20. TEXAS TECH

Texas Tech coach William (Spike) Dykes is always quick with an encouraging word, but he also knows tough love. Junior defensive end Tony Daniels found that out when he began to encounter academic troubles during the second semester of his freshman year. Dykes couldn't reach Daniels by phone, and when he showed up at his dorm room, the player wasn't there. Finally Dykes found him in a dining hall and delivered his message without a trace of Southern hospitality. "He told me he had promised my mother I'd get a degree from Texas Tech, and he was going to make sure of it," Daniels recalls. "He said, 'I may be an old guy, and you may get the best of me, but in the end, you'll know you've been in a fight.'"

The Red Raiders would do well to adopt that as a mantra for the next few years as they try to establish themselves in the Big 12. Before Dykes took over as head coach in 1986, Tech had enjoyed one winning season in the previous eight years. Since then Dykes has led the Raiders to four bowl games, and the Raiders have finished first or second in the Southwest Conference every year since '91. With six '95 bowl teams on its slate this season, however, Texas Tech's recently acquired respectability will be tested as never before. "We're going to have to grow up in a hurry," Dykes says.

Which is not to say they're not up to the challenge. The Raiders, who finished 9-3 last season, have two of the most potent offensive weapons in the country in running back Byron Hanspard, an ordained Pentecostal minister whom the school is touting as a Heisman Trophy candidate, and quarterback Zebbie Lethridge, both juniors. Sophomore Sheldon Bass, who led the team in receiving as a true freshman in '94, is back after missing last season with a broken collarbone, and four players who have started return to the offensive line. Tech's offense will have to produce the way it did a year ago—on 41 trips inside their opponent's 20-yard line, the Raiders scored 31 touchdowns—because the defense graduated its top three tacklers.

But the program can continue to grow even if Tech drops a few games to big-name opponents this season—as long as those teams leave the field knowing they've been in a fight.

—S.D.





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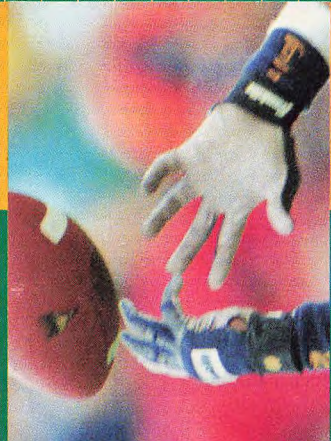
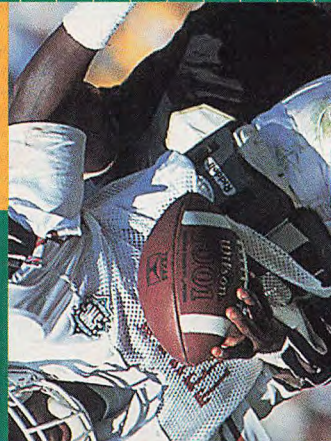
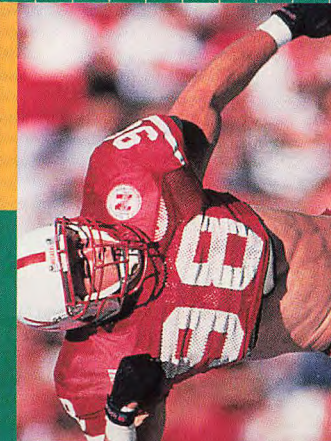
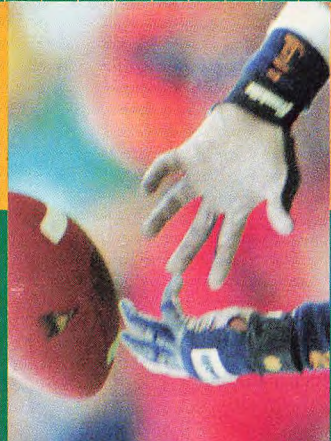

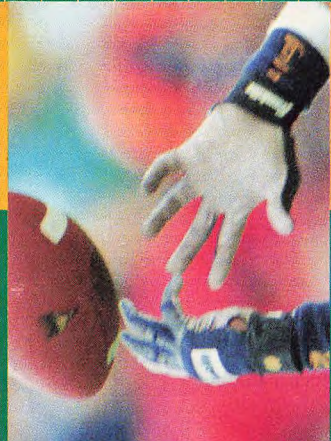
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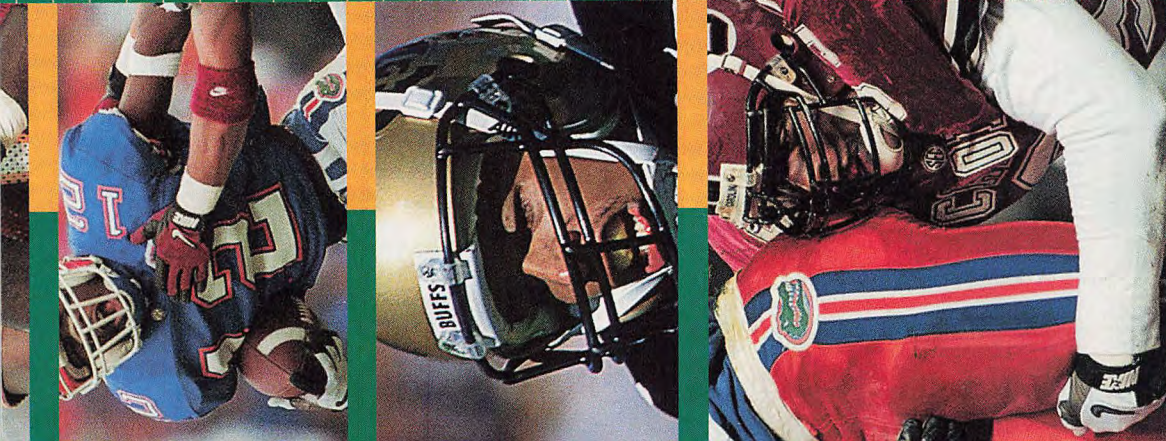


Team		'95 Record	Returning Starters
1	Tennessee	11-1	13 With Peyton Manning and a sweet schedule, Vols win first national title since '51
2	Nebraska	12-0	12 New QB, Stanford transfer Scott Frost, will be a Heisman candidate by October
3	Florida	12-1	14 Pressure's on new defensive coordinator Bob Swoops after 62-24 Fiesta Bowl loss
4	Colorado	10-2	16 A schedule that includes six Top 20 teams keeps the Buffaloes from No. 1
5	Notre Dame	9-3	14 The Four Horsemen: backs Autry Denson, Marc Edwards, Robert Farmer and Randy Kinder
6	Syracuse	9-3	15 Stores that used to sell only No. 44 jerseys now also sell No. 5 of QB Donovan McNabb
7	Northwestern	10-2	13 They won't sneak up on anyone, but Schnur, Autry & Co. will continue to surprise
8	Florida State	10-2	15 The best team in the ACC (again) but the second-best in Florida (again)
9	USC	9-2-1	10 Last time Trojans beat Notre Dame and UCLA in same year: Marcus Allen was tailback
10	Texas	10-2-1	14 QB James Brown, TB Shon Mitchell and FB Ricky Williams form best backfield in Big 12
11	Kansas State	10-2	11 The corners' report: DBs Chris Cancy and Joe Gordon are deadly to opposing offenses
12	LSU	7-4-1	14 Tigers make tracks with QB Herb Tyler and RBs Kevin Faulk and Kendall Cleveland
13	Penn State	9-3	11 Sophomore TB Curtis Enis led the Lions in rushing (683 yards) without starting a game
14	Texas A&M	9-3	12 Eight starters return to the Wrecking Crew, the nation's third-best defense in '95
15	Michigan	9-4	14 End Jarrett Irons and linebacker Glen Steele give Wolverines' defense its mettle
16	Iowa	8-4	14 RB Sedrick Shaw can run, QB Matt Sherman can throw, and WR Tim Dwight can do it all
17	Miami	8-3	17 Indefinite suspension of three starters may reduce Hurricanes to tropical depression
18	Kansas	10-2	14 Coach Glen Mason knew something when he turned down an offer from Georgia
19	Virginia	9-4	13 Under George Welsh, the Cavaliers have won at least seven for nine straight years
20	Texas Tech	9-3	14 QB Zebbie Lethridge and RB Byron Harspard combined for 3,396 total yards in '95
21	Ohio State	11-2	16 Loss of Heisman winner, two other first-round NFL draftees and QB will hurt
22	Oregon	9-3	12 Green Gang: Defense may have as many as eight freshmen on two-deep roster
23	Virginia Tech	10-2	11 DE Cornell Brown is back to lead last year's top rushing defense (77.4 yards per game)
24	Utah	7-4	15 Announcers better learn to pronounce Chris Fuamatu-Ma'afala, the Utes' fullback
25	Auburn	8-4	14 New defensive coordinator Bill Oliver spent the past six years assisting at Alabama
26	Arizona State	6-5	19 Pac-10's best offense, with QB Jake Plummer (2,222 yards) and WR Keith Poole (55 catches)
27	Clemson	8-4	13 TB Raymond Priestner (1,286 yards) is the O; LB Anthony Simmons (154 tackles), the D
28	Alabama	8-3	17 Soft schedule will make for a gaudy record—until the Tide turns at Tennessee on Oct. 26
29	Washington	7-4-1	12 Junior tailback Rashaan Shehee led the Pac-10 in scoring (15 TDs) last season
30	Georgia	6-6	14 QB Mike Bobo and TB Robert Edwards are back after injuries cost them most of '95
31	East Carolina	9-3	15 Pirates own best record (16-8) of any school in the Carolinas over past two years
32	Purdue	4-6-1	13 Threw only eight TD passes in '95 yet outscored foes (282-269) for first time since '83
33	Baylor	7-4	13 Kicking fraternity: Ty Atteberry punts while baby brother Kyle placekicks
34	Michigan State	6-5-1	14 Derrick Mason (2,051 yards) is 591 yards short of NCAA career kickoff-return mark



	35	Wisconsin	4-5-2	16	<i>Ten starters back on offense; new man is QB Brady Batten (362 passing yards in '95)</i>
	36	Arizona	6-5	14	<i>New coach Steve Mariucci tutored NFL MVP Brett Favre in Green Bay</i>
	37	California	3-8	15	<i>TBs Mike Mitchell and Anthony Bookman combined for 1,465 yards last year</i>
	38	Stanford	7-4-1	13	<i>Return man extraordinaire Robert Tate helps Bearcats reach first bowl in 46 years</i>
	39	Cincinnati	6-5	12	<i>Cougars go bowling again after missing out last season for first time since 1978</i>
	40	BYU	7-4	12	<i>Last fall tailback Madre Hill, now a junior, gained 1,387 yards without fumbling</i>
	41	Arkansas	8-5	12	<i>Only Nebraska has rushed for more yardage in each of the last two seasons</i>
	42	Air Force	8-5	9	<i>Don Nehlen's Mountaineers have never had two straight losing seasons, and won't now</i>
	43	West Virginia	5-6	13	<i>Sooners could finish under .500 for first time since new coach John Blake was four</i>
	44	Oklahoma	5-5-1	9	<i>LB Dennis Stallings (130 tackles) may become third straight Illini to win Burkus Award</i>
	45	Illinois	5-5-1	16	<i>TB Leon Johnson is 21 points shy of becoming the leading scorer in school history</i>
	46	North Carolina	7-5	16	<i>Know your enemies: New coach Bob Toledo used to work at Oregon and USC</i>
	47	UCLA	7-5	10	<i>WR Marcus Harris needs 1,490 yards receiving to become NCAA's alltime leader</i>
	48	Wyoming	6-5	18	<i>The only Miami to finish in the top 10 in total defense or scoring defense in '95</i>
	49	Miami (Ohio)	8-2-1	17	<i>First I-A offense with 3,000-yard passer; 1,000-yard rusher; two 1,000-yard receivers</i>
	50	San Diego State	8-4	16	<i>Nonconference schedule includes Nebraska, Colorado and Oregon</i>
	51	Colorado State	8-4	13	<i>Seven starters return from defense that led nation in forcing turnovers (41)</i>
	52	Louisville	7-4	11	<i>After 1-10 mark in '94, Yellow Jackets continue to improve</i>
	53	Georgia Tech	6-5	16	<i>With TB Wasean Tait (173.2 average in '95), another undefeated season is possible</i>
	54	Toledo	11-0-1	12	<i>Scheduling games at Georgia, Alabama and Florida State is admirable but masochistic</i>
	55	Southern Mississippi	6-5	15	<i>New coordinator Tim Rose inherits Big Ten's worst defensive unit</i>
	56	Minnesota	3-8	12	<i>Senior Brad Maynard (46.5 yards per punt) led the nation last year</i>
	57	Ball State	7-4	17	<i>With one O-line starter back, freshman QB Tim Couch's seat will have bluegrass stains</i>
	58	Kentucky	4-7	10	<i>Can new coordinators Lynn Amedee (offense) and Joe Lee Dunn rescue Jackie Sherrill?</i>
	59	Mississippi State	3-8	14	<i>In four games started by QB Brian Cummings, now a junior, Terps averaged 33 points</i>
	60	Maryland	6-5	16	<i>Sophomore QB Ryan Leaf has drawn comparisons to former Cougar Drew Bledsoe</i>
	61	Washington State	3-8	12	<i>Former Florida LB Darren Hambrick will help D that allowed 35.7 points per game</i>
	62	South Carolina	4-6-1	11	<i>Eagles fly 5,080 miles for season opener at Hawaii but go nowhere in January</i>
	63	Boston College	4-8	15	<i>Can nine new starters refuel offense that averaged 500 yards the past three years?</i>
	64	Nevada	9-3	10	<i>Big East, remember Big West? Billy West ran for 1,358 yards in '94 but was hurt in '95</i>
	65	Pittsburgh	2-9	9	<i>Cowboys were just 15 points away from 7-5 in coach Bob Simmons's first year</i>
	66	Oklahoma State	4-8	14	<i>Cadets have finished in top seven in rushing offense every year since 1984</i>
	67	Army	5-5-1	11	<i>A Wolfpack: Three candidates vie to replace three-year starting QB Terry Harvey</i>
	68	N.C. State	3-8	15	<i>Larry Beckish is Blue Devils' fifth offensive coordinator in five seasons</i>
	69	Duke	3-8	11	<i>QB Charlie Batch was fourth in total offense last year</i>
	70	Eastern Michigan	6-5	9	<i>How not to start life in the WAC: with defense that was 83rd against the pass</i>
	71	Tulsa	4-7	14	<i>Can QB Chuck Clements offset woeful D (32.7 points per game in '95)?</i>
	72	Houston	2-9	16	<i>Lou Groza Award winner Michael Reeder is 27 of 27 from inside the 39-yard line</i>
	73	TCU	6-5	10	
	74	Mississippi State	3-8	14	





# Sports Illustrated

75	Indiana	2-9	16	Hoosiers, 0-8 in Big Ten in '95, open league play against Northwestern, 8-0 last year
76	Temple	1-10	16	QB Henry Burris is great but no draw—4,406 attendance average was I-A low
77	Navy	5-6	15	Midshipmen could be 5-1 when they face Notre Dame in Dublin, Ireland, Nov. 2
78	Rutgers	4-7	9	New coach Terry Shea brings the West Coast offense to the East from San Jose State
79	Southwestern Louisiana	6-5	14	Coach's son Brandon Stokley set NCAA freshman mark for catches (75) in '95
80	Memphis	3-8	12	Converted CB Keith Cobb earned MVP honors at tailback in the spring game
81	Vanderbilt	2-9	15	Season-ticket holders are happy: Nore Dame, Florida and Tennessee visit Nashville
82	Iowa State	3-8	15	Had best rusher (Troy Davis, 2,010 yards); worst rushing D (296.6 yards per game)
83	SMU	1-10	16	QB Ramon Flanigan returns after season-ending hip injury on first play of '95
84	Missouri	3-8	18	Dubious mark of consistency: Tigers have had five straight three-win seasons
85	Rice	2-8-1	12	Five Owls return who each rushed for at least 100 yards in '95
86	Fresno State	5-7	15	Coach Jim Sweeney, 66, will have trouble getting the four wins he needs for 200
87	Bowling Green	5-6	13	Offensive coordinator Michael Faragalli back after one-year stint in CFL
88	New Mexico	4-7	14	Out of WAC: Lobos ranked next to last in pass-efficiency defense a year ago
89	Western Michigan	7-4	9	With so few veterans around, Broncos' string of six winning seasons is likely over
90	Oregon State	1-10	11	After five years of futility with the wishbone, the Beavers are adding I-formation
91	Central Michigan	4-7	16	RB Silas Massey (1,089 yards) helps Chippewas recover from worst record since '61
92	Louisiana Tech	5-6	12	New coach Gary Crowton inherits WR Chad Mackey (90 catches) but little else
93	New Mexico State	4-7	10	Tailback Dennis Manns led all freshmen in rushing (1,120 yards) last fall
94	Wake Forest	1-10	14	There's no place like ... Orlando? Wake "hosts" Florida State at the Citrus Bowl
95	Tulane	2-9	17	The Green Wave has its best team in years—but that does not mean much
96	Hawaii	4-8	12	Hawaii, 5-0? Hasn't happened since 1981, when Rainbow Warriors finished 9-2
97	North Texas	2-9	16	Depth in Denton: Top rusher Bo Harrison (455 yards in '95) being moved to wideout
98	Utah State	4-7	12	Abu Wilson (1,476 yards in '95) wears No. 1 and stands alone in one-back offense
99	UNLV	2-9	12	Grieving Las Vegas: Rebels open season at top-ranked Tennessee on Aug. 31
100	Northern Illinois	3-8	14	Charles Talley (1,540 yards in '95) hopes to be second Husky to lead nation in rushing
101	Northeast Louisiana	2-9	13	Senior Raymond Philyaw has tossed 36 career TD passes and only 14 interceptions
102	Arkansas State	6-5	8	For first time in four years, coach John Bobo had enough players to stage spring game
103	Kent State	1-9-1	15	Ronald Reagan was president the last time Golden Flashes struck three-win mark
104	UTEP	2-10	16	A freshman in '95, John Rayborn strafed Air Force with five TD passes in 56-43 loss
105	Akron	2-9	19	The aptly named Zips won't score much more than the 141 points they got last fall
106	Ohio	2-8-1	17	Far to go: Bobcats, with 10 wins in the '90s, travel to Hawaii and Army in nine days
107	San Jose State	3-8	10	Six true freshmen started in '95, more than in the previous 17 years combined
108	Boise State	7-4	7	Tony Hilde threw for 2,386 yards and 18 TDs in '95, the Broncos' last year in I-AA
109	Idaho	6-5	10	UCLA transfer QB Ryan Fien tries to minimize damage in Vandals' move to I-A
110	Central Florida	6-5	13	Sophomore QB Daunte Culpepper's first dozen collegiate tosses were completions
111	Alabama-Birmingham	5-6	16	School's prestigious physical therapy program could be busy

TOP TO BOTTOM: PATRICK MURPHY/ACEY; RONALD G. MODRA; DOUG PENNINGER; TODD ROSENBERG; JOE RAYMOND; DAMIAN STROHMEYER; AL TELEMANS (2); CARL YARBROUGH; JIM GUND



# Conference Rankings

## ACC

1. Florida State
2. Virginia
3. Clemson
4. North Carolina
5. Georgia Tech
6. Maryland
7. N.C. State
8. Duke
9. Wake Forest

## Big East

1. Syracuse
2. Miami
3. Virginia Tech
4. West Virginia
5. Boston College
6. Pittsburgh
7. Temple
8. Rutgers

## Big Ten

1. Northwestern
2. Penn State
3. Michigan
4. Iowa
5. Ohio State
6. Purdue
7. Michigan State
8. Wisconsin
9. Illinois
10. Minnesota
11. Indiana

## Big 12

### North

1. Nebraska
2. Colorado
3. Kansas State
4. Kansas
5. Iowa State
6. Missouri

### South

1. Texas
2. Texas A&M
3. Texas Tech
4. Baylor
5. Oklahoma
6. Oklahoma State

## Big West

1. Nevada
2. New Mexico State
3. North Texas
4. Utah State
5. Boise State
6. Idaho

## Conference USA

1. Cincinnati
2. Louisville
3. Southern Miss
4. Houston
5. Memphis
6. Tulane

## Mid-American

1. Miami (Ohio)
2. Toledo
3. Ball State
4. Eastern Michigan
5. Bowling Green
6. Western Michigan
7. Central Michigan
8. Kent State
9. Akron
10. Ohio

## Pac-10

1. USC
2. Oregon
3. Arizona State
4. Washington
5. Arizona
6. California
7. Stanford
8. UCLA
9. Washington State
10. Oregon State

## SEC

### East

1. Tennessee
2. Florida
3. Georgia
4. Kentucky
5. South Carolina
6. Vanderbilt

### West

1. Louisiana State
2. Auburn
3. Alabama
4. Arkansas
5. Mississippi State
6. Mississippi

## WAC

### Mountain Division

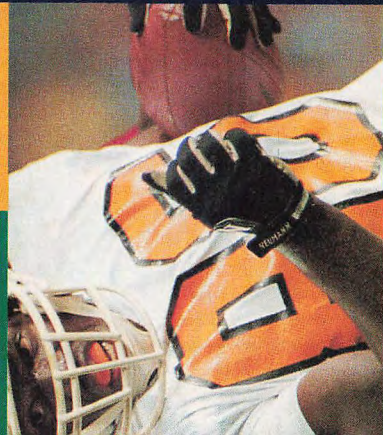
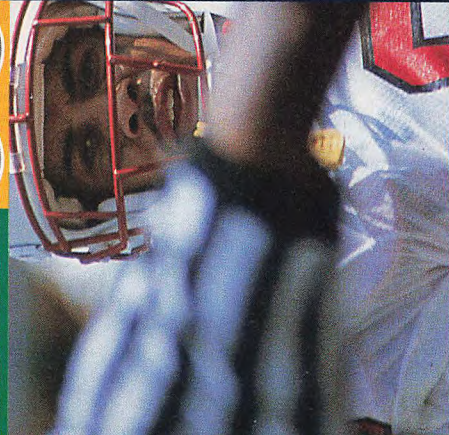
1. Utah
2. Brigham Young
3. Tulsa
4. Texas Christian
5. Southern Methodist
6. Rice
7. New Mexico
8. UTEP

### Pacific Division

1. Air Force
2. Wyoming
3. San Diego State
4. Colorado State
5. Fresno State
6. Hawaii
7. UNLV
8. San Jose State

## Independents

1. Notre Dame
2. East Carolina
3. Army
4. Navy
5. Southwestern Louisiana
6. Louisiana Tech
7. Northern Illinois
8. Northeast Louisiana
9. Arkansas State
10. Central Florida
11. Alabama-Birmingham







BY RICK WOLFF

# Don't Kill The Umpire, Give Him Some Credit

Here's a riddle for you: What's even tougher than being a youth league coach or parent?

Answer: Being a youth league referee or umpire.

A good ref or ump should a) check to see if a child is injured on a play b) make sure that players and coaches practice good sportsmanship c) encourage a young athlete who may be having a particularly tough time—by counseling the goalie in a lopsided soccer game, consoling a pitcher who can't throw a strike, etc. d) ensure that league eligibility rules are being followed and e) try to make every call as fairly as possible.

Of course, we parents all recognize that

referees and umpires fulfill an unsung but absolutely essential role for our children's sporting activities. Nevertheless, too many parents and coaches still feel they have every right to verbally (and, on rare, occasions even physically) attack these men, women and teenagers.

Yes, booing the ump or ref has become something of an American tradition in professional sports. But remember that

here, we're talking about youth league refs and umps, many of whom are volunteering their time to help our kids. Yelling, screaming, or threatening an official is not an activity we should take part in, particularly in front of our children.

## Some Friendly Advice

- ✓ Hey, Mom and Dad, before you start to criticize a ref's call, make sure you know the rules. When was the last time you read the rule book?
- ✓ Remind your children that judgment calls are merely part of the game. Accept these calls from the umpire or referee, and then play on.

## Research.



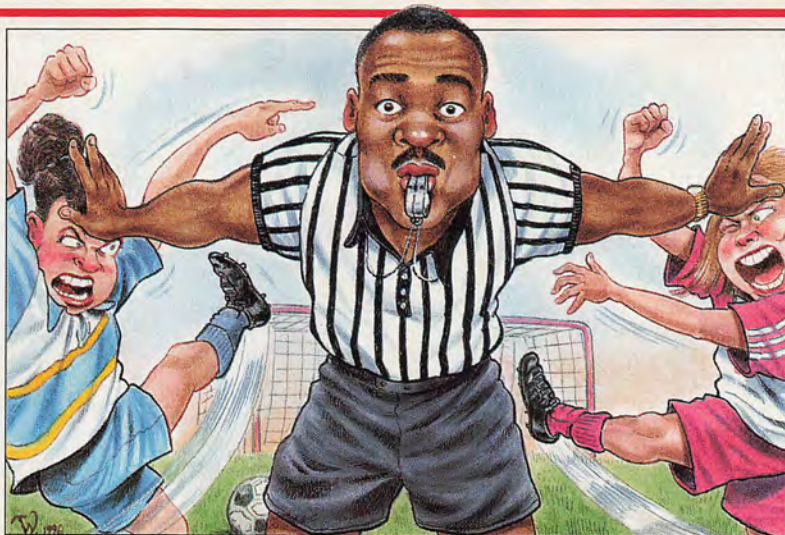


Furthermore, to blame a loss on a ref's call is also setting a poor example. "Ah, the ump was terrible," a kid will complain after a contest. "He cost us the game."

Such a comment from a young athlete really misses the point about competition. Accepting responsibility and being accountable for one's losses is an extremely valuable lesson for kids (and their parents) in sports—and it's a lesson all parents should reinforce to their children.

The truth is that refs and umpers are usually quite dedicated people. They know the rule book, and they can maintain a mature perspective on a game when most of us parents can't. Also, the refs help teach our children some very valuable lessons about winning, losing and fair play.

Sadly, these days, you may actually have to explain to your children what behavior is most appropriate when they're addressing an ump or ref. Ideally, your kids' coaches should do the job, but that doesn't always happen. So, explain to your young athletes that refs and umpers are grown-ups (or teenagers) who are there to keep the game running smoothly. Tell your children that, as athletes, they should feel free to talk with the ref. At the very least, they should listen to and respect what the ref has to say. And point out that yes, even the best ump will miss a call, just as even the best baseball player strikes out or makes an error. They're only human.



**A GOOD REF MUST SOMETIMES TAKE MATTERS INTO HIS OWN HANDS.**

As for you, the parent, don't be afraid to give the ref a sincere smile and a pat on the back for a job well done after a game. This is particularly meaningful when the gesture comes from the parents of both the winning and losing teams. The beleaguered fellow will certainly appreciate the kind words.

*Sports psychology expert Rick Wolff is the father of three children and the author of Good Sports, The Concerned Parent's Guide to Competitive Youth Sports (Sagamore, 1-800-327-5557). You can send questions to him at Parents' Guide, P.O. Box 5574, New York, N.Y. 10185-5574.*

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That's Plymouth.



**Lower Division Rankings****Top 20**

<b>Division I-AA</b>		<b>'95 Record</b>	<b>Returning Starters</b>	
1.	<b>Marshall</b>	12-3	16	QB Eric Kresser and WR Randy Moss: I-A transfers
2.	<b>Montana</b>	13-2	16	Grizzlies' 42.5 points per game led I-AA a year ago
3.	<b>Delaware</b>	11-2	13	Leo Hamlett's 165.4 QB rating best among I-AA returnees
4.	<b>Stephen F. Austin</b>	11-2	16	RB Dameian Vallery, a 'Bama transfer, gets a leading role
5.	<b>McNeese State</b>	13-1	8	FS Zack Bronson leads D that forced 40 turnovers in '95
6.	<b>Appalachian State</b>	12-1	13	LB Dexter Coakley will vie for Player of the Year honors
7.	<b>Northern Iowa</b>	8-5	15	Have won or shared six straight Gateway Conference titles
8.	<b>Murray State</b>	11-1	12	William Hampton returned four pickoffs for TDs in '95
9.	<b>Troy State</b>	11-1	11	DE Pratt Lyons had 14 sacks and 88 tackles last season
10.	<b>Southern</b>	11-1	10	RB Melvin Williams led SWAC with 1,086 yards last fall
11.	<b>Eastern Kentucky</b>	9-3	12	Colonels seeking 17th playoff appearance in 19 years
12.	<b>Hofstra</b>	10-2	13	Kicker Dave Ettinger led I-AA with 22 field goals in '95
13.	<b>Georgia Southern</b>	9-4	13	Schedule includes Florida, Marshall and Appalachian State
14.	<b>Rhode Island</b>	7-4	17	Chris Hixson threw for 2,250 yards and 15 TDs last fall
15.	<b>Youngstown State</b>	3-8	16	Penguins will rebound after first losing season since '88
16.	<b>Middle Tennessee State</b>	7-4	16	Ends Anthony McCord, Anthony Hicks lead stingy defense
17.	<b>Liberty</b>	8-3	14	Sam Rutigliano's Flames on the verge of first playoffs
18.	<b>William &amp; Mary</b>	7-4	10	FS Darren Sharper spearheads outstanding secondary
19.	<b>Idaho State</b>	6-5	16	Alfredo Anderson 1,341 yards shy of Big Sky rushing mark
20.	<b>Southwest Missouri State</b>	4-7	13	Jeremy Hoog completed 62% of his passes last season



Division II		'95 Record	Returning Starters	
1.	<b>North Alabama</b>	14-0	9	<i>Lions are primed for fourth straight national title</i>
2.	<b>Texas A&amp;M-Kingsville</b>	11-2	10	<i>Fifteen transfers give Javelinas added depth</i>
3.	<b>Pittsburg (Kans.) State</b>	12-1-1	11	<i>Gorillas are winningest Division II team of all time</i>
4.	<b>New Haven</b>	10-1-1	15	<i>Chargers are replacing their entire secondary</i>
5.	<b>North Dakota</b>	9-2	15	<i>LB Tim Tibesar anchors a veteran defense</i>
6.	<b>Ferris State (Mich.)</b>	12-1	10	<i>Chris Pulliams rushed for 1,729 yards in '95</i>
7.	<b>Virginia State</b>	8-2	14	<i>CB Telley Priester had eight interceptions last fall</i>
8.	<b>Edinboro (Pa.)</b>	9-2	13	<i>Defense is the Fighting Scots' strength</i>
9.	<b>Carson-Newman (Tenn.)</b>	9-3	9	<i>1995 brought Eagles their first NCAA playoff win</i>
10.	<b>North Dakota State</b>	10-3	14	<i>QB Rob Hyland is back after injury-marred '95</i>
11.	<b>Valdosta (Ga.) State</b>	6-5	13	<i>Lance Funderburk threw for 26 touchdowns last year</i>
12.	<b>Albany (Ga.) State</b>	8-4	12	<i>Protean quarterback Ed Taylor leads charge</i>
13.	<b>Texas A&amp;M-Commerce</b>	8-4	15	<i>New moniker for former East Texas State</i>
14.	<b>Fort Hays (Kans.) State</b>	8-2-2	13	<i>Four starters are back on veteran offensive line</i>
15.	<b>Millersville (Pa.)</b>	9-1-1	14	<i>Had first unbeaten regular season since '40</i>
16.	<b>Indiana (Pa.)</b>	8-3	7	<i>End-of-season Top 20 for 12 straight years</i>
17.	<b>Bloomsburg (Pa.)</b>	9-1-1	12	<i>Family affair: four sets of brothers on team</i>
18.	<b>South Dakota</b>	8-3	14	<i>Coyotes have nine starters back on offense</i>
19.	<b>Central Arkansas</b>	7-4	15	<i>Bears are bracing for a brutal schedule</i>
20.	<b>West Georgia</b>	8-3	10	<i>Braves must rebuild their entire backfield</i>

Division III		'95 Record	Returning Starters	
1.	<b>Mount Union (Ohio)</b>	12-1	16	<i>Raiders' .911 is best percentage in college football in '90s</i>
2.	<b>Rowan (N.J.)</b>	10-3-1	12	<i>QB Greg Lister's previous stops: Maryland and Pitt</i>
3.	<b>Wisconsin-LaCrosse</b>	14-0	13	<i>Roger Harring will pass Woody Hayes on career-wins list</i>
4.	<b>Albion (Mich.)</b>	8-1	14	<i>QB duo of Joe Pesci and Kyle Klein best in Division III</i>
5.	<b>Washington &amp; Jefferson (Pa.)</b>	10-1	15	<i>Presidents in semis two of the past three election years</i>
6.	<b>St. John's (Minn.)</b>	8-1-1	14	<i>Johnnies be good: 29 years since last losing season</i>
7.	<b>Wisconsin-River Falls</b>	9-3	16	<i>Linebacker with bite: Woody Fangmeier, 12 sacks in '95</i>
8.	<b>Wittenberg (Ohio)</b>	10-1	16	<i>Divine intervention: Ken Pope had nine pickoffs last fall</i>
9.	<b>Buffalo State</b>	9-2	14	<i>Perez Dinkins led team's 425-yards-per-game stampede</i>
10.	<b>Central (Iowa)</b>	10-1	7	<i>Mark Kacmarynski 748 yards shy of 5,000 in his career</i>
11.	<b>Lycoming (Pa.)</b>	8-3	19	<i>Converted RB John Verton All-America at safety in '95</i>
12.	<b>Emory &amp; Henry (Va.)</b>	9-2	14	<i>Wasps' 22-game home winning streak longest in division</i>
13.	<b>Cornell (Iowa)</b>	10-1	11	<i>Safety Heath Allard has 15 interceptions past two years</i>
14.	<b>Coe (Iowa)</b>	7-2	14	<i>Ray Neosh ran for 1,354 yards as a freshman in '95</i>
15.	<b>Washington (Mo.)</b>	9-1	16	<i>QB Thor Larsen put the hammer to opponents (27 TDs)</i>
16.	<b>Allegheny (Pa.)</b>	9-1	16	<i>Scored 42.5 points a game last fall; allowed 9.4</i>
17.	<b>Wisconsin-Stevens Point</b>	8-2	14	<i>Out of Harms way: Nate Harms averaged 5.2 yards per carry</i>
18.	<b>Wartburg (Iowa)</b>	9-1	14	<i>Lost Grant Bearbower (30 tackles for losses last season)</i>
19.	<b>Franklin &amp; Marshall (Pa.)</b>	7-3	16	<i>QB Beau Eckert was team's ball boy from 1980 to '89</i>
20.	<b>Dickinson (Pa.)</b>	7-2-1	12	<i>Matt Bixler: 105 tackles, seven interceptions in '95</i>



CF96



**DIVISION I-AA**

# Boss Cross

*Out of the spotlight since '92, former NFL and TV star Irv Cross is tackling sports again as athletic director at Idaho State*

**by William F. Reed**





RICH FRISHMAN

YOU COULDN'T blame the folks at Idaho State for thinking the letter was a joke. The author wrote that he was interested in applying for the athletic director's job, and it was signed by Irv Cross—the same Irv Cross who was a mainstay on CBS's popular *The NFL Today* after spending nine seasons as a defensive back in the NFL. Idaho State officials passed the letter around, and each had the same reaction: Why would *he* want to come to Pocatello?

Cross had asked himself the same question when he saw Idaho State's help-wanted ad in *The NCAA News* last January. Sure, he had wanted to get into sports management for a long time. But Pocatello? Isn't that rather small potatoes for a guy who used to exchange quips on Sundays with Phyllis George, Brent Musburger and Jimmy the Greek? "I looked at my wife," says Cross, "and I said, 'Pocatello, Idaho? Where in the world is that?'"

So Cross did his homework, just as he had when he was playing for the Philadelphia Eagles and the Los Angeles Rams in the 1960s. In those days he kept index cards on every receiver he faced. By the time he wrote to Idaho State, Cross knew a lot about the job.

He knew that the Bengals' athletic department needed to find new sources of income. He also knew that the two main revenue-producing sports—football and men's basketball—had been tarnished by low graduation rates and high crime rates. Still, he wrote. "I like the challenge of going into a program where they need some help," he says. "They've had disciplinary problems and trouble with their image. Besides that, being in a university environment excites me. I'm one of those guys who is always looking for a way to improve himself."

Cross's background with the NFL and CBS and his strong belief in the value of education impressed the Idaho State search committee. "He's just so full of ideas and has contacts that no one else has," says Diane Bilyeu, the Bannock County assessor who chaired the committee. "Only once in a lifetime do you have an opportunity to hire an Irv Cross. This will help not only the university but the whole state."

On March 1, Idaho State hired Cross for \$89,900 a year, even though he had no experience in athletics administration. And Cross took the job, even though he is black and Pocatello, Idaho, is almost completely white. Only 356 blacks—more than half connected to the university—live in the town of 53,903. But Cross, who grew up in the segregated America of the 1950s, is prepared for whatever awaits him. "My parents always told me that when you go someplace, act like you belong and people will accept you," says Cross, still optimistic at age 57.

Cross, who was one of 15 children, grew up in Hammond, Ind., and earned a football scholarship to Northwestern. He played wide-out under coach Ara Parseghian and in 1959 caught the winning touchdown pass in a 30–24 upset of Notre Dame. He was already preparing for life after football by then: As a senior he supplemented his degree in education with public-speaking courses.

In the NFL, Cross let his play speak for him, and he more than held his own against top receivers such as Bob Hayes, Homer Jones and Del Shofner. After being hit by Cross several times during a game in 1965, Jim Brown said, "No one in the league tackles harder than that Cross." Cross's mentor, both in football and broadcasting, was Eagles defensive back Tom Brookshier, who went on to a long career as a CBS commentator. In 1965 Brookshier said of Cross, "He's the best one around at his position. He has wonderful football sense."

While with the Eagles, Cross worked as a drive-time radio sports commentator and a weekend TV anchor during the off-season. After a three-year stint with the Rams, Cross returned to the Eagles, in 1969, as a player-coach. He retired from playing after one season, but he stayed on as a coach. In 1971 he faced a tough decision: Should he accept Dallas Cowboys president Tex Schramm's invitation to join the Cowboys' front office or say yes to CBS's offer to become the first black sports analyst on national television? "At that time there wasn't that much black influence in the front offices of the NFL," says Cross. "I would have been an experiment. It was a pretty daring thing for the Cowboys to do. But I took a shot at TV—how smart was that? My excuse was that I had been a defensive back, and I'd been hit in the head a lot."

During his years with CBS—he worked in the broadcast booth for four seasons before joining *The NFL Today* team in 1975—Cross paved the way for other African-American sportscasters. He was always true to himself. In his first season on *The NFL Today*, CBS wanted him to dress for the show in a leisure suit with his shirt open halfway down his chest and a gold chain around his neck. "I was supposed to be the sex symbol," says Cross. "I refused. Vigorously. Finally [CBS sports chief Bob] Wussler said, 'Aah, just dress the way you feel comfortable.' I wore a coat and tie. That was me."

When CBS fired Musburger during the 1990 NCAA Final Four, Cross figured that his days with the network were numbered, too. Sure enough, that fall the network moved Terry Bradshaw and



Greg Gumbel into the studio and demoted Cross to game analyst. In the spring of '92, CBS Sports president Neal Pilson informed Cross that he wasn't going to renew his contract. Cross offered to take a pay cut, but the network wasn't interested.

Cross didn't immediately pursue another network job, nor did any of the other networks pursue him. "I didn't have an agent, and I didn't search for a TV position as aggressively as I should have," he says. "I just quietly faded away. I finally got around to calling the guys at Fox and Turner, but they didn't seem to have any need for my services." For the four years between leaving CBS and accepting the Idaho State job, Cross was a consultant in the Leesburg, Va., office of Smith Barney, Inc., where he dealt primarily with cities and individuals interested in financing new stadiums and arenas. He stayed involved with football as a part owner of the CFL Baltimore Stallions.

Cross and his wife, Liz, and their two children, Matthew, now 7, and Sarah, now 5, lived on a farm in Markham, Va., about 50 miles from Washington, D.C. It was an idyllic existence in many ways, and Cross understands that he's taking a risk by leaving it. Liz is white, and some might wonder how an interracial couple will be received in Pocatello.

"My wife is the one who encouraged me to take the job," says Cross. "She said, 'You've always dreamed of being in sports management—let's do it.' All my life I've been the only black in my classrooms or the first black to do this or that. I am concerned a little about how my kids will be accepted. But our kids always have had a different take on the world. We treat people fairly, and we expect to be treated fairly."

In Pocatello, Cross takes over an athletic program with 14 varsity teams, seven for men and seven for women, and a budget of \$4 million. The Bengals compete in Division I in every sport but football, in which they're in Division I-AA. They are members of the Big Sky conference, which recently lost

**Once a hit as a talking head, Cross is the talk of Pocatello as head of sports at Idaho State.**



RICH FRISHMAN

Boise State and Idaho to the Big West. "We plan to be the anchor of the Big Sky," Cross says. "I'm excited about it. We have to build up morale, we have to have winning teams, and we have to make sure our kids get their educations."

And that is the answer to Why Pocatello? The need for good leaders and good work is at least as great at Idaho State as it is at Penn State or Florida State or any other school.

Last October five football players pleaded guilty to misdemeanor battery. At one point during the basketball season five of Idaho State's 12 scholarship players were ineligible for disciplinary reasons. Cross, a man of such decency and courage that he once, along with fellow broadcaster James Brown, apprehended two teenage muggers in New York City's

Central Park, promises to be firm in dealing with those transgressing the rules and the law. Behind the easygoing demeanor and megawatt smile that became familiar to millions of television viewers, Cross is as tough as hickory.

"When Cross says something, it will mean something to our athletes," Bilyeu says. "His belief that education is the most important thing—that's what really sold the committee. Our expectations were high before he got here for his interview, but when we interviewed him, he was even better than we anticipated."

Cross's arrival at Idaho State coincides with what could be a breakthrough season for the Bengals. Coach Brian McNeely, who is starting his fifth year in Pocatello, has slowly built Idaho State into a contender for the Big Sky title. Cross's first order of business will be to help generate enthusiasm for the team and fill the stands. He also hopes to boost donations to the school's athletic-scholarship fund from \$400,000 per year to \$1 million. "People in the community have to know that we want them and need them," he says. "I want to tell people why it's a good investment to support Idaho State athletics."

Cross is trying to lure George, his former colleague, to Idaho State to tape some TV spots for the Bengals. Irv and Phyllis together again. In Pocatello. ■



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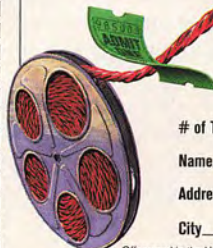
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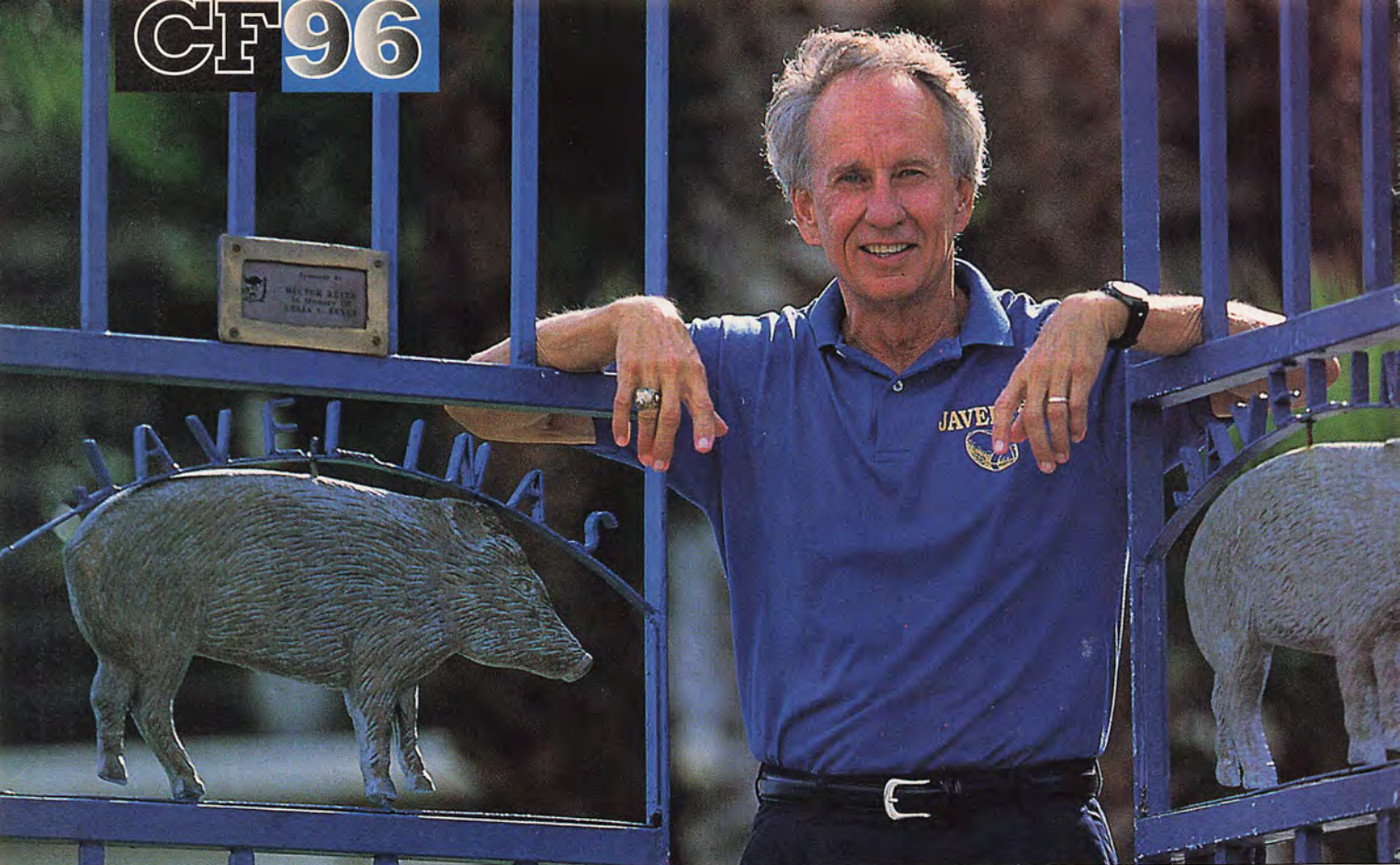
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## DIVISION II

# Farm Team

*Texas A&M—Kingsville keeps on raising first-round draft picks, and this season it might harvest the big prize—a national title*

**by Dana Gelin**

RESEARCHERS AT Texas A&M—Kingsville have produced two varieties of grapefruit over the past 20 years: the Star Ruby and the Rio Red. They're hard at work trying to come up with a strain of thornless prickly pear cactus—cattle could eat it during droughts, and without prickles the pads would make great pickles. But Texas A&M—Kingsville's best-known crop is professional football players.

Forty-six players from the Division II school that until 1993 was known as Texas A&I have been selected since the first NFL draft, in 1936. Offensive tackle Jermaine Mayberry, taken by the Philadelphia Eagles with the 25th pick in last spring's draft, was

the eighth first-round selection in school history. Other first-round picks were quarterback Randy Johnson (Atlanta Falcons in '66), offensive lineman Gene Upshaw (Oakland Raiders in '67), defensive back James Hill (San Diego Chargers in '69), wide receiver Eldridge Small (New York Giants in '72), defensive tackle Ernest Price (Detroit Lions in '73), fullback Don Harde-man (Houston Oilers in '75) and cornerback Darrell Green (Washington Redskins in '83). Kingsville has had more first-rounders over the last 30 years than any other school outside Division I and many inside it. Kansas State, for instance, has had only two.



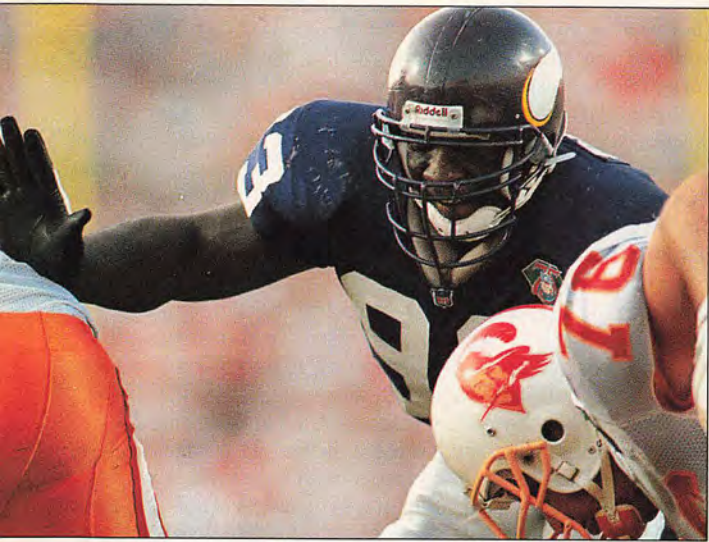
In addition to Mayberry, four players from the 1995 Javelinas (pronounced haav-uh-LEEN-uhs) signed with NFL teams as free agents, and two more joined the CFL. That's a typical yield for the school, which has 6,500 students. Besides Green, it has cultivated such current pro standouts as Green Bay Packers offensive tackle Earl Dotson and Minnesota Vikings defensive tackle John Randle. "Almost every day last fall we had a couple of scouts at practice," says Mayberry. "And this isn't the kind of place you can just drop by."

There is no easy way to get to Kingsville (pop. 25,000), which lies 100 miles north of the Mexican border. The quickest way is to hop a flight into Corpus Christi, 39 miles northeast of campus. From there, follow Highway 44 west to Highway 77 south. The biggest town you'll pass through is Robstown, Upshaw's hometown. "We played some good football in Kingsville," says Upshaw, a member of the NFL Hall of Fame and now the executive director of the NFL Players Association. "So we knew the scouts would find us."

Upshaw almost saw to it that the scouts missed him. He didn't much like football in high school and hadn't planned to play in college. In 1963 he was at freshman orientation when he paused to watch football practice. Coach Gil Steinke, who led Texas A&I to six NAIA titles in 23 years before retiring in '76, spotted the 6-foot, 200-pound spectator and invited him to join in. Three days later Upshaw had a scholarship, and four years later, having added five inches and 55 pounds to his frame, he was the 17th pick in the draft.

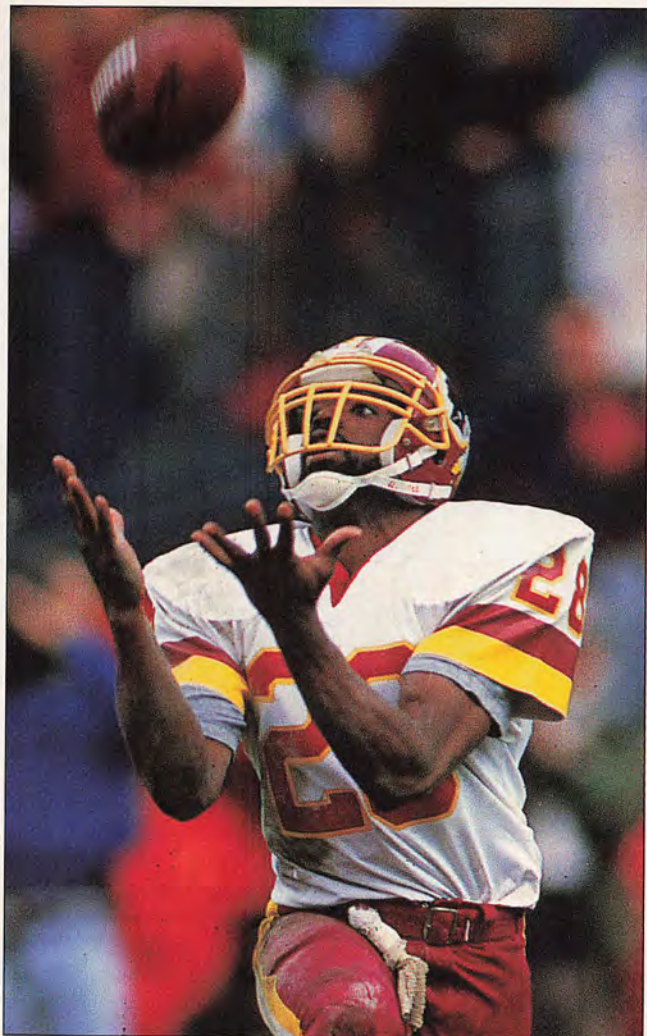
Suiting up bystanders isn't

**When recruiting, Harms (opposite) can point to successful alumni such as Randle, Green (28) and Hall of Famer Upshaw (63).**

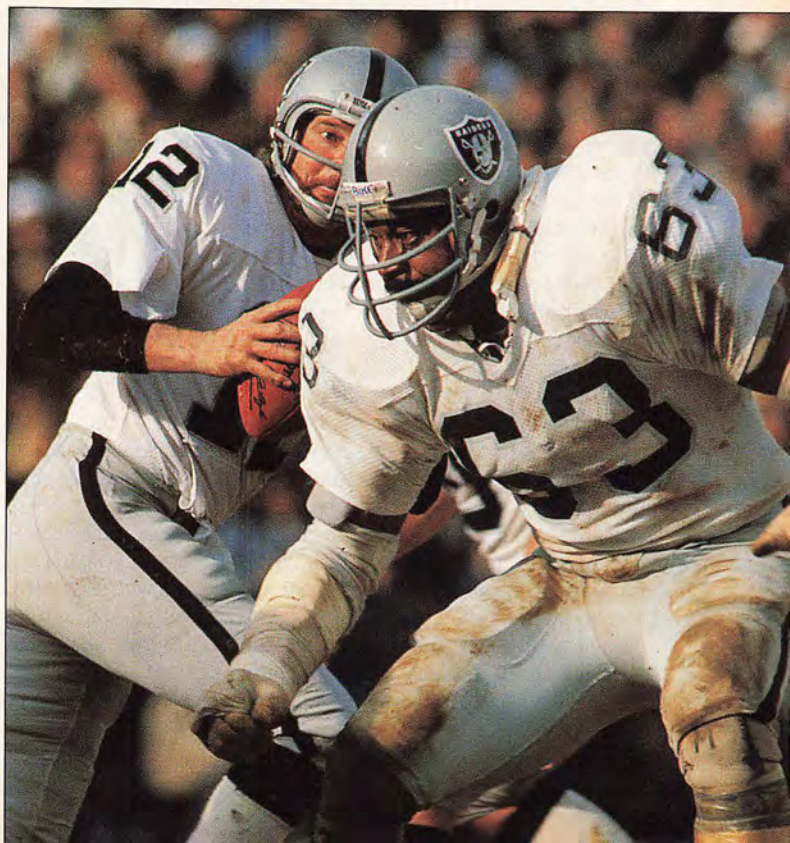


standard procedure for the Javelinas. Free safety Tyrone Marshall, linebacker Chris Hensley and offensive tackle Todd Perkins, seniors all, are more typical of the players who make up Texas A&M-Kingsville's roster.

The 6' 1", 175-pound Marshall, a native of Austin, signed with BYU in 1994 after spending two years at Trinity Valley Community College in Athens, Texas. But since he didn't graduate from Trinity Valley, he was ineligible to play in Division I. So he headed for Kingsville largely because of the Javelinas' reputation for developing pros. "Darrell Green is one of the best out there, so people still come down here and look for defensive backs," says



CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE: PHIL HUBER, JOHN IACONO, WALTER IOSS JR. (2)







PHIL HUBER

Marshall. Although he missed all of last season because of a torn ligament in his right knee, Marshall appears to be back in the form that made him Lone Star Conference defensive back of the year in '94.

Hensley, who's from Bandera, played junior college baseball for a year at Hill College in Hillsboro, Texas, before transferring to Kingsville. He walked on to the football team and immediately impressed the coaches with his speed—at 6' 3" and 230 pounds, he has covered the 40 in 4.53 seconds—and aggressiveness. He's planning to redshirt this season after a spring knee injury, but Javelinas coach Ron Harms expects him to get a shot at the NFL in 1998.

The 6' 4", 290-pound Perkins seems destined to become the fourth member of last season's offensive line to make it to the NFL. (Jorge Diaz and Kevin Dogins signed as free agents this April with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Dallas Cowboys, respectively.) When he was a high school senior, TCU and Texas A&M invited Perkins to walk on. But he decided to follow in the footsteps of his father, Ken, who played for the Javelinas in 1963 and '64 and then for the Cowboys and the Edmonton Eskimos of the CFL.

How does Harms convince would-be NFL players to come to Kingsville? For 17 years he has been telling recruits that the steady stream of NFL scouts would counter the team's lack of national exposure. And while he makes them no promises, Harms does let players know that they won't be overlooked. "When they talk about their hopes after college, we point to many of our successes," says Harms, literally pointing to the framed portraits of the school's All-Americans that line the walls of the lounge in the athletic department. "The evidence is there."

Harms and his assistants are dedicated to piling up the evidence and molding more NFL players. Running backs coach Don Pittman has participated in internship programs with four NFL teams, including a stint with the Cowboys this summer. Juan Castillo, who spent nine years as an assistant to Harms, was an intern with three NFL teams; he tutored the Javelinas' offensive linemen using film from pro training camps. "I think the insight

**Marshall (16), Hensley (45) and Perkins may be the next Javelinas to step into the pros.**

they've brought back helps us know what the pros are looking for," says Harms.

Castillo is now in his second year as an assistant with the Eagles. For a college player with pro aspirations, the only thing better than being tutored by a former NFL assistant is to know a current NFL assistant.

Despite all the talent that has blown through Kingsville, the Javelinas haven't won a national title since switching from the NAIA to NCAA Division II in 1982. They reached the semifinals last season before losing 28-25 in overtime to Pittsburgh State. In '94 they lost 16-10 to North Alabama in the championship game. "I'm sure everybody around here feels we're long overdue for a national championship," says Harms, who still wears a gold ring the size of a Rio Red grapefruit to commemorate the Javelinas' 1974 title, when he was offensive coordinator under Steinke. He has another, the size of a Star Ruby, from the school's last national title, in '79.

This could be the year that Harms gets yet another ring. Perkins is the only starter back on the line, but the rest of the offense is solid. The quarterback is 6' 2", 210-pound junior Oktay Basci, a Kingsville native, who was named all-conference last year. Three other starters are back from that unit, which averaged 39.6 points per game last season. And six players return from a defense that gave up an average of just 15.3 points per game in '95.

A title would help boost awareness that old Texas A&I is now part of the Texas A&M system. Alums didn't accept the new name warmly, and many still refer to the school as A&I. Still, the Javelinas will always be the Javelinas—the only team in the NCAA named after the beagle-sized relative of the wild boar. When the school was founded and the mascot chosen in 1925, javelinas roamed the area. (One bit the school president in '29.) Today you could spend years on campus without seeing a javelina, except for the team mascot, Porky, who is brought to games in a cage. Nowadays, at Texas A&M-Kingsville you're much more likely to run across future NFL players. They're all over the place. ■





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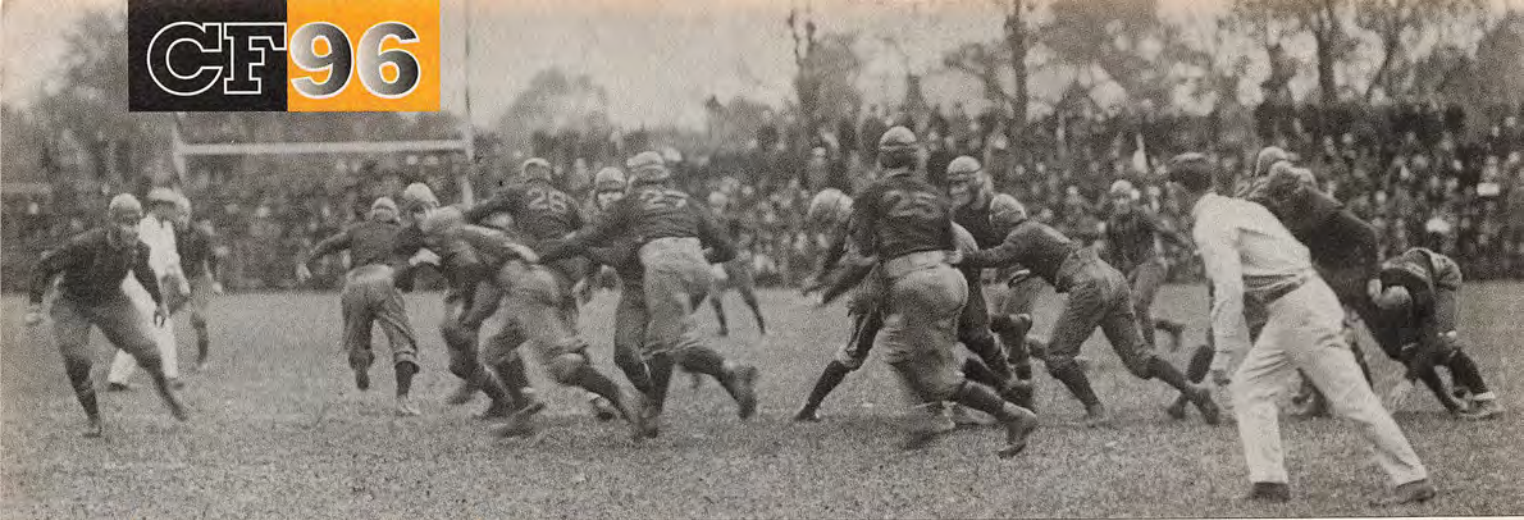


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## DIVISION III

# Lost Glory

*Oberlin is John Heisman's alma mater and a fabled conqueror of Ohio State, but the Yeomen have had little to celebrate lately*

**by Christian Stone**

THEY WERE, with apologies to Chuck Bednarik, the last of the 60-minute men. Of the 19 students who suited up for Oberlin's season finale two years ago, only quarterback James Parker had not played on both sides of the ball that fall. "We did it all," says center-defensive lineman Chris Lavin, who was a freshman then. "Offense, defense, special teams, some guys playing every down."

Of course, little glory is conferred upon any player, even a two-way player, who suits up for a team that is outscored 358-10 and fails to score a touchdown on offense, as was the case with Oberlin in 1994. Indeed, having to play both ways under such circumstances seems less an honor than a sentence. "I remember the 83-0 loss to Allegheny," says Adam Shoemaker, who played free safety, tight end and fullback for the Yeomen in '94 and who graduated last spring. "I'd look at the Allegheny sideline and see players stretched from one end zone to the other. Must have been 100 of them. Then I'd look at our sideline, where there were more people out of uniform than in uniform."

Oberlin players no longer have to play the whole game, but that doesn't mean the Yeomen's fortunes have improved. Last fall they were outscored 469-72 and finished 0-10, extending their losing streak to 30. Only Division I-AA Prairie View A&M, which has lost an NCAA-record 57 consecutive games, has a longer streak. Haplessness was not always the case at Oberlin, which, like Prairie View, boasts a rich football history. John Heisman was a player-coach for the Yeomen in 1892 and coached the team two years later. Oberlin was the last Ohio school to defeat powerhouse Ohio State, doing so in 1921 by the score of 7-6. "If you go

back, you'll find that football occupies a special place at Oberlin," says third-year coach Pete Peterson. "As for people's suggestions that we would be better off without football, that's crazy. Absolutely crazy."

Yet against the backdrop of its recent history, the notion that there was a Golden Age of Oberlin football seems impossible. On the 2,800-student campus today, the game is viewed by some as an underground activity. The school has other things to recommend it, of course. Oberlin has been admitting women since it was founded in 1833. Two years later the school opened its doors to African-American students, becoming the first college in the U.S. to admit both women and blacks. Oberlin is also famed for its music program, which turns out world-renowned sopranos and tenors with the same regularity that Penn State mints NFL linebackers. "Oberlin doesn't get its identity from football," says history major Lavin. "I think there are some people on campus who still don't know we have a team."

You can hardly blame folks for pleading ignorance. Oberlin football has been so frightful in the 1990s, during which the team's record is 2-56, that the Yeomen have actually kept the clock running at home games when time should have been out. Although Peterson denies this has happened on his watch, athletic director Don Hunsinger admits, "A few years back, before Pete got here, there was, yes, some, uh, clock management."

If only that were the worst of it. In 1992, after a 56-0 loss to Allegheny, injuries and attrition had reduced the roster to 16, forcing Oberlin to forfeit its subsequent game against Wittenberg.



There was some perverse solace to be taken from the forfeit, though. "Nobody got hurt," says one school official, "and a forfeit shows up as a 6-0 loss in the books, which was better than most of our scores."

Peterson took over the Yeomen in June 1994. With the roster nearly depleted and only two months to recruit new bodies, he sent a letter to every incoming and returning male student. "I don't remember exactly what it said," Peterson says. "Something like, 'If you've ever dreamed of playing college football, we'd like to have you come out.' We just didn't have time to recruit the conventional way. If that meant taking a guy who had never played football before, that's what we did."

Shoemaker was among the handful of Walter Mittys who took

into the net or into the curtain that surrounded the indoor courts. I thought about it during the summer; then the letter came [from Peterson], and I decided to go through with football."

Throughout the 0-9 season of '94, Peterson never had more than 24 active players. After the second week of preseason workouts, no contact was allowed in practice. When players were excused for lab classes, exams and injuries, coaches participated in drills. It wasn't uncommon to see Hunsinger faking a handoff to Peterson in the backfield and then firing the ball downfield to defensive line coach Thomas Smith. Once, an out-of-town reporter was called upon to serve as a defensive back. Given those circumstances it comes as little surprise that the Yeomen's second-leading tackler that fall was none other than the 6' 3", 190-pound Shoemaker.

The 44-year-old Peterson laughs grimly at these anecdotes. He is seated in a comfortable leather chair in the school's Heisman Room, which was donated by the school's Heisman Club in 1978. Above him hangs an elegant, four-foot-tall portrait of Heisman himself, his carriage slightly bent, a ball tucked under his right arm, his left arm thrust outward. It is the most recognizable pose in college football. Yet, even with a guardian angel like the great John Heisman watching over the program, Oberlin has had little success signing the players it has tried to recruit. In the last two years Peterson has sent letters to more than 20,000 prospects. But this year he will probably open the season with no more than 35 players. That is well short of the 79 with which most Division III teams play.

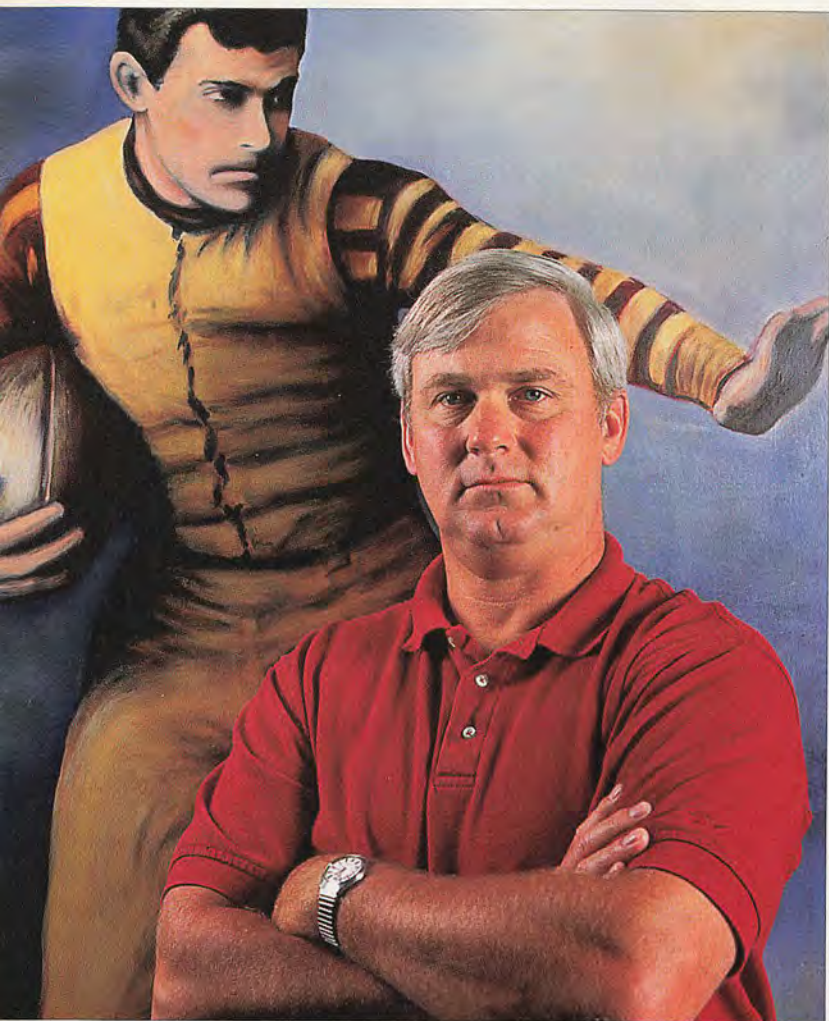
Peterson sees progress, though. He speaks of Tom Hosier, who hired him as an assistant at Eureka (Ill.) College 18 years ago. In 1979 Hosier left for Macalester College in St. Paul, which was in the midst of a losing streak that would run to 50 games, the NCAA record until Prairie View eclipsed it last season. "Within three years Macalester won four games in a season," says Peterson. "Two years later they had a winning record. There's no reason that can't happen at Oberlin. And don't forget Northwestern, the program that gives all of us hope."

Oberlin has committed almost \$400,000 to upgrading its football facilities. Unlike her immediate predecessors, president Nancy S. Dye is an avid supporter of the football program. And Peterson's past two recruiting classes, though smaller than he would have liked, have included some talented prospects. As a freshman last year, Felix Brooks-Church, a lithe 6' 4", 195-pound wide receiver, caught 26 passes for 315 yards. This year's

freshman class includes 6' 7", 305-pound offensive lineman James Fielder, who was recruited as a walk-on by Arizona.

**Peterson knows who's looking over his shoulder, but Heisman can't help him break a losing streak that has reached 30.**

Oberlin players and coaches are optimistic. Church and Lavin talk boldly of ending the streak and of making a run at a .500 season. "Oberlin gives you a great education," says Brooks-Church, "but I came here to play football and win football games too. We want to win as much as every other college player. Unfortunately, until we win a game, the stigma will be with us."



Peterson up on his offer. He had played on the tennis and soccer teams at Oberlin, and in the spring of 1994 several of his friends suggested he give football a try, although he had never played the sport in an organized league. Shoemaker broached the subject with Hunsinger, who at the time doubled as the tennis coach and the football team's defensive coordinator. Initially Hunsinger dismissed the query as a joke. "Gradually, though, he took me more seriously," recalls Shoemaker. "By the end of the semester he came up to me and said, 'I think you'd make a pretty good football player. Maybe you should give it a try.' He was impressed by my attacking style, the way I'd do anything to get to a ball, like running



**CF96**

*With his father's guidance,  
Manning has become the  
consummate film buff.*

# Matinee Idol

*Now playing on Saturday afternoons: Tennessee's Peyton Manning.*





PATRICK MURPHY/RACEY

*who is reveling in his birthright as the nation's best quarterback*

**by Tim Layden**









JOHN BREWER

## SEPTEMBER 16, 1995

### FLORIDA 62, TENNESSEE 37

Rain falls through suffocating humidity, forming deep, wide puddles at the corners of Florida Field. The Gators score a touchdown. And then another, and another, until the noise from beneath the umbrellas and ponchos begins to sound like the ceaseless roar of traffic. On the visitors' sideline, Tennessee's sophomore quarterback, Peyton Manning, sits on a metal bench, hair matted to his forehead, anger fixed on his soft face.

He had opened his life to a reporter in the week before this embarrassment. The story was supposed to be about his preparation for a game, about how he started on Monday morning with a weight workout in the predawn darkness and then went straight to calculus up on the Hill, a cluster of classrooms that many Vols athletes avoid because it's too far from the sports facilities. It was supposed to be about how he studied game film every afternoon and evening and did more interviews than the rest of his teammates combined. About how when he arrived at English class on Thursday morning, two women in the class asked him to help them distill the plot of *The Awakening* because he had read the novel and they hadn't. About how he seemed to fit the forgotten image of what a college athlete could be.

That afternoon in Gainesville, Manning walked from the floor of the stadium and paused in the tunnel outside the locker room. There, he embraced his father, who whispered to him, "We're proud of you." Then Peyton clattered away. In the wake of this devastating loss, there would be no story.

Eleven months have passed and another college football season beckons. Peyton Manning is the player of the year before the first ball is snapped. He holds in his 20-year-old hands the dreams of Tennessee football fans, who desperately want an SEC title and the Volunteers' first national championship since 1951, and who want to see Manning become the school's first Heisman Trophy winner. He is also some NFL team's living fantasy, a 6' 5½", 223-pound once-in-a-decade catch who might enter the draft after this, his junior season. "He's the first pick," says the New York Giants' director of college scouting, Tom Boisture. "Last year, this year, next year, whenever he wants." Manning is in a magical place, soon to be a wealthy professional, but for one more year he is a throwback, living an ideal. Now *there* is a story.

It begins in the fourth game of Manning's freshman season, when he becomes the starting quarterback after injuries to two upperclassmen. The Volunteers would go on to win 18 of 20 games with him as the starter. Last season they finished 11-1, ranked No. 3 in the country, as Manning threw 380 passes and had just four intercepted. "Here's the way I look at it," says Mississippi State defensive coordinator Joe Lee Dunn. "Florida's Danny Wuerffel is a good college quarterback. Peyton is a good pro quarterback. Right now."

When NFL scouts make their spring pilgrimages to college campuses, they are supposed to evaluate only seniors, but when they came to Knoxville a few

■ *The 6' 5½" Manning already has the body and skills of a pro quarterback.*



months ago they couldn't help but be distracted by a sophomore. San Diego Chargers quarterbacks coach Dwain Painter not only noticed Manning—"I had already heard our scouts raving about him," says Painter—but also approached him to ask about several of Tennessee's seniors. Who would know them better than their quarterback? In return, Manning grilled Painter. Having just studied a tape of the Miami Dolphins' playoff loss to the Buffalo Bills, Manning was curious about the coverages that had seemed to confuse Dan Marino. Painter was taken aback. Such

When senior quarterback Jerry Colquitt and junior backup Todd Helton were injured in the first and fourth games of the season, respectively, Manning got the chance to use what he had learned. He became the starter, and Brannndon Stewart, another highly regarded freshman, became the backup. (Stewart has since transferred to Texas A&M and is expected to be the Aggies' starter this year.)

Tennessee coach Philip Fulmer remembers a practice last fall when the team was doing a blitz-pickup drill, in which offensive linemen and running backs work on blocking. "There are no receivers in the drill," says Fulmer. "All the quarterback has to do is take a snap and drop back to give us the proper depth. But here's Peyton coming up to the line, giving signals to receivers who aren't out there, doing his checks, dropping back full speed, setting up ... and there's *nobody* out there. All the coaches were laughing, but that's the way he lives his life. Peyton lives to be better. He's like the coach's little son who's 5' 9" and can't break an egg when he throws—except Peyton is 6' 5", with a world of talent."

In his sophomore year at Isidore Newman, the private school in New Orleans that he attended from kindergarten, Peyton first quizzed his father about studying game film. This was logical, because his father, Archie Manning, played quarterback in the NFL for

inquisitiveness is not normal in a player so young. College quarterbacks normally ask about meal money. Says Painter, "After talking to him, it's obvious he's way ahead of most young quarterbacks."

Last February, Manning attended the banquet for the Davey O'Brien Award, given annually to the quarterback voted best in the nation by a panel of sportswriters. Wuerffel won; Manning was a finalist. Runners-up seldom attend the ceremony, but Manning went to Dallas with a purpose. At a reception for past winners, Manning worked the room for tutelage—from the Philadelphia Eagles' Ty Detmer ("I wanted to talk to him about the West Coast offense he played under in Green Bay, and because I knew his father coached the passing game in high school and because he went to Brigham Young," says Manning), from the Carolina Panthers' Kerry Collins ("Because he was a rookie last year") and from the San Francisco 49ers' Steve Young ("He was surrounded the whole time, but I told him I'd love to pick his brain sometime"). Not a moment of idle chatter. "I figured I had two hours with those guys," says Manning. "I wasn't going to waste it by making small talk."

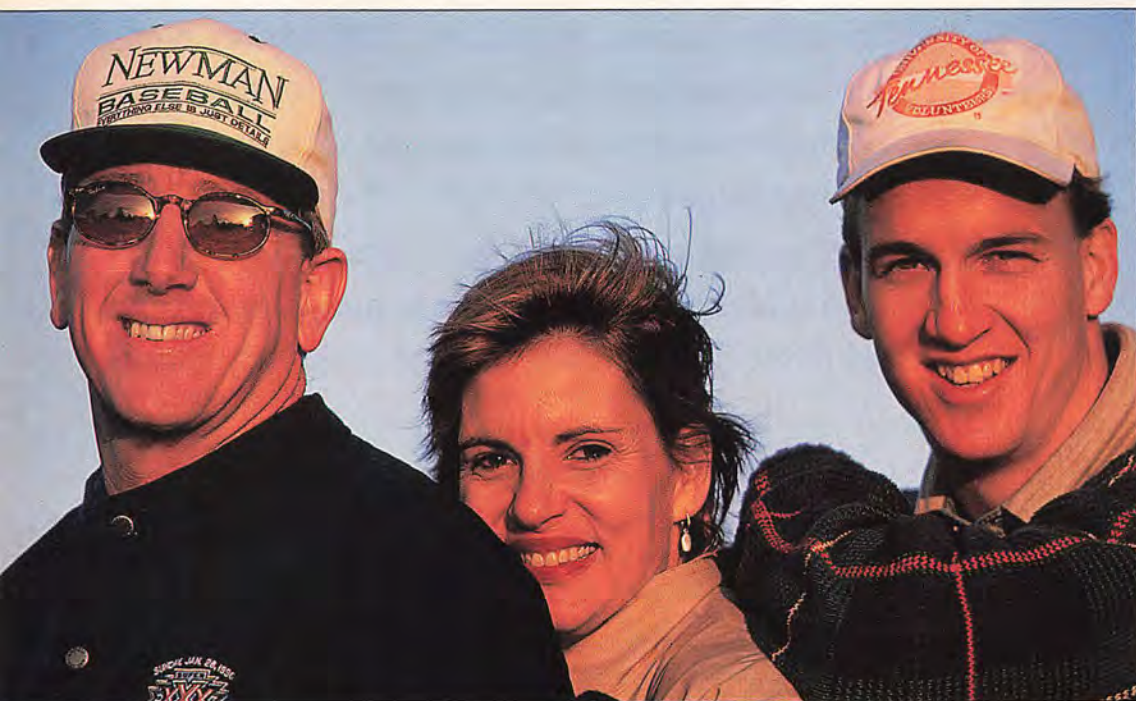
This surprises no one at Tennessee, where Manning has flabbergasted teammates and coaches with his work ethic since the summer of 1994. "He came in with an attitude that I've never seen in any freshman," says fifth-year senior fullback Eric Lane. Manning went to Knoxville six weeks earlier than most other freshmen to acclimate himself to the football program and participate in workouts with older receivers and running backs. "He wanted to get as much work done as possible, every day," says Lane.

**Thanks to Archie and Olivia, Peyton has college football in his blood.**

14 years. Archie didn't push his son to study film then; the quality of tapes from high school games wasn't very good anyway. But two years later, when Peyton expressed an interest in perusing some NFL game films, Archie told him, "If you're going to watch film, do it the right way." By that he meant, Don't watch the ball, watch the defense; fans watch the ball.

With this tiny piece of advice Archie helped create a monster who watches more videotape than Bob Saget. Reporters have phoned the Volunteers' film room late at night in search of offensive coordinator David Cutcliffe and instead reached Manning. Pizzas have been delivered to the film room so that Manning could eat a midnight meal while breaking down Alabama's goal line defense. Cutcliffe has done extra work on the weekends lest he be caught unprepared at Monday afternoon's quarterbacks meeting. "I know he's going to have a bunch of questions right away," Cutcliffe says of Manning. "He's somebody very special, and I don't want to let him down."

During his freshman year Manning was so eager that he couldn't keep himself from jumping on all queries made to Cutcliffe. One day Helton (who was selected as a first baseman by the Colorado Rockies in the first round of the 1995 baseball draft) lost his temper. "Peyton, don't answer my questions!" he shouted.



PATRICK MURPHY/ACEY



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Last September, in the six days leading to Tennessee's drubbing by Florida, Manning watched more than 20 hours of tape on his own. In February his apartment mates moved Manning's VCR to the living room. "We figured maybe we could bring dates over and watch movies," says Vols senior linebacker Greg Johnson, one of Manning's best friends on the team. "That lasted maybe a month." The VCR was moved back to Manning's room.

Manning's apartment mates call him Caveman and his bedroom the Cave. On Saturday nights after home games he often returns to his apartment to watch a tape of the game. "I'm guessing most college players are out celebrating on Saturday night," says Ashley Thompson, the 21-year-old University of Virginia senior whom Manning has dated since they met in the fall of 1994. ("Even Peyton's love life is set up pretty well," says his father. "He's crazy about Ashley, but he just doesn't have time for a girlfriend on campus.")

By the summer of '95, Manning was organizing the informal passing drills that he had crashed the previous July. He left messages on the answering machines of wideouts and defensive backs. "It was tough for me, adjusting to his work ethic," says senior wideout Joey Kent, who caught 69 of Manning's passes last season, nine for touchdowns. "He was so young."

Over time, Manning has only tightened the screws. This year he began coordinating workouts in January, only days after the Vols' 20-14 Citrus Bowl win over Ohio State. Often he would gather a dozen teammates in Tennessee's field house, only to find the baseball team practicing there. The ballplayers gave Manning 15 yards to work with—it was their season and their practice, after all. Manning took their 15 and raised them 10, until defensive backs were bouncing off infielders. Turf skirmishes ensued. Finally athletic director Doug Dickey confronted Manning and said, "Peyton, give way."

It was like telling Larry Bird not to shoot jumpers after practice. "He's telling me I can't come out here and throw," says Manning. "Well, I don't want to push it, but I stuck my opinion in there. We threw for 3,000 yards last year, completed 64 percent, because of what we were doing in January and February. You ask some quarterbacks, 'Hey, you been throwin'?' They say, 'Yeah.' Well, their idea of throwing is two quarterbacks playing catch. My idea is getting receivers and defensive backs out here. Something tells me it hasn't been done much here before, and that's why there was controversy."

It is not the first time that Manning's hypercompetitiveness has led him to cross an athletic department official. In his junior year of high school, after Manning made his annual transition from football to basketball (before going on to baseball in the spring), Newman basketball coach Billy Fitzgerald chose not to start him. Fitzgerald, a tough, successful coach who posts aphorisms by Bob Knight on the walls of his office, didn't think Manning

was ready. Manning thought he was, so the two argued. The team's sixth man as a sophomore, Manning left the basketball team by mutual agreement. "It was typical of Peyton the competitor," says Fitzgerald. "I don't fault him for it. It was a privilege to coach him." On the morning that Manning signed with Tennessee, Fitzgerald was the second person he called.

"He taught me about toughness," says Manning. The payoff has been extraordinary. Manning's preparation has turned the college game into a plaything for him. Last Oct. 7, Dunn, then the defensive coordinator for Arkansas, which would win the SEC's Western Division, threw everything but Nolan Richardson's 40 Minutes of Hell at Tennessee. Manning completed 35 of 46 passes for 384 yards and four touchdowns in a 49-31 victory. "We tried to make it complicated for

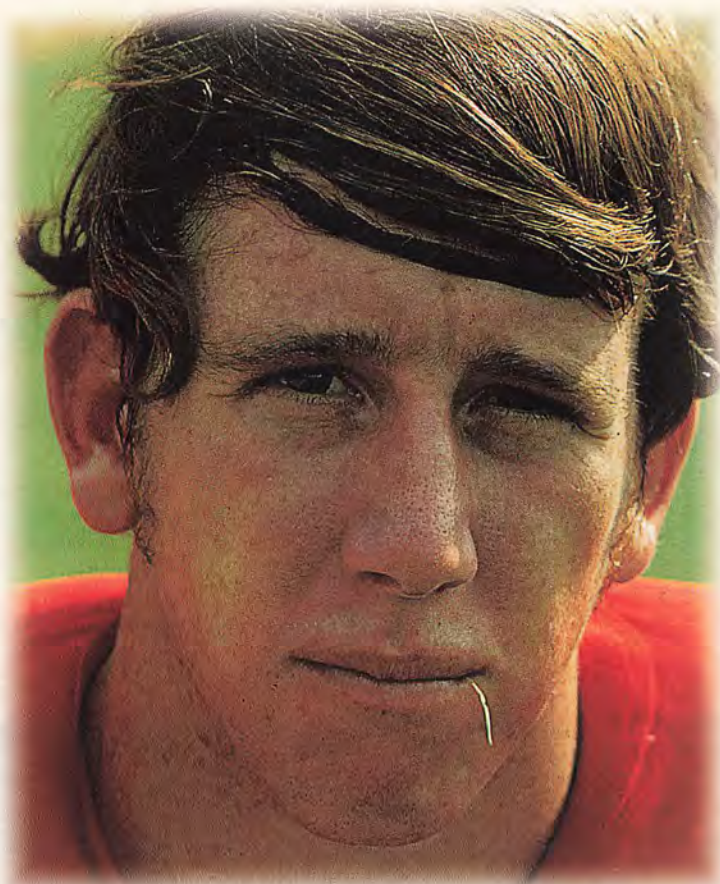
**Archie, at Ole Miss in 1970, was no hayseed—he was a full-fledged Southern hero.**

him," says Dunn. "And he handled everything. He's really good."

It is Manning's mind that NFL teams covet most. As the pro game has become more complex, it has become more difficult for young quarterbacks to excel. "I don't think there's ever been a quarterback who has been as prepared, mentally, as Manning is," says one NFL personnel director.

But some of his physical attributes and tools are ready for the pros, too: the height, the quick release. Bobby Beathard, general manager of the San Diego Chargers and an old friend of Archie's, called Archie one night last winter. "I was just watching the Tennessee-Alabama tape," said Beathard, who was evaluating an Alabama defensive back. "Tell me, how does your boy get rid of the ball so fast?"

The scouts whisper about Manning's weight and his arm strength, but most haven't seen him since last fall. He has gained nearly 10 pounds. He can squat 400 pounds and bench 315—a vast improvement from his freshman year. "The idea that Peyton is just





this mental machine is way off," says Cutcliffe. "He's got that, but he's got quick feet, great balance, velocity on the ball."

There is little doubt about Manning's future. The questions are about details: how many dollars over how many years, paid by which NFL team and when? A speech communications major with a minor in business, Manning has a 3.58 GPA and is on course to get his degree as early as next summer. If he leaves Knoxville after this season, he will have given Tennessee three years, 28 to 30 wins, 20 home sellouts and maybe that first Heisman. His would probably be about the most logical early departure in history.

But, he says, "I've done crazier things than stay four years at Tennessee. Like coming to Tennessee in the first place [instead of going to his dad's alma mater, Mississippi]. All I know is I'd like to play this fall without looking one day ahead."

His passion doesn't flow from the promise of NFL stardom but from his vision of college football as a pristine institution. He lives for Saturdays, not Sundays, because he grew up the son of Archie Manning, who—before he was the beaten, beleaguered quarterback of the New Orleans Saints, Houston Oilers and Minnesota Vikings (1971–84)—was one of college football's last great heroes.

Archie went to Ole Miss in the fall of 1967 from the tiny Mississippi Delta town of Drew (pop. 2,143). By the end of his junior year he had restored the Rebels to a place among the nation's elite teams and had been hailed as perhaps the best quarterback in a national class that included Stanford's Jim Plunkett, Notre Dame's Joe Theismann, Santa Clara's Dan Pastorini and Ohio State's Rex Kern. Archie was also the object of a statewide adoration that hasn't abated 26 years later. "He was a legend, much larger than life," says author John Grisham, who grew up in Southaven, Miss. Grisham, who is six years younger than Archie,

has twice invoked him in novels, putting a poster of Archie on a character's wall in *A Time to Kill* and naming a Supreme Court justice Archibald Manning in *The Pelican Brief*.

Peyton immersed himself in his father's college legacy after an Ole Miss fan sent the Mannings audiotapes of the Rebels' epic 1969 upsets of Georgia and LSU. Peyton, then a junior in high school, popped the tapes into his stereo, lay across his bed and let history wash over him. He listened as his dad's offense, every member a Mississippian, was described by the play-by-play man: *Manning brings 'em to the line. There's Mitchell from Columbus, Coker from Clarksdale. . . Manning sprints out right, throws . . . touchdown! Touchdown, Ole Miss!* Peyton memorized the calls and embellished them: "Manning, the 6' 3" Drew redhead, brings 'em to the line. . ."

He quizzed both his father and his mother, Olivia, the Ole Miss homecoming queen whom Archie married in 1971. They told him what college football was like, how magical Saturdays were, how they had double-dated with Archie's teammates and their steadies. Peyton embraced his father's past and formed a picture of his own future. He would be a quarterback, but not in the NFL. "Dad's college career was such a bright memory," says Cooper Manning, Peyton's older brother. "His pro career was . . . what? Guys in the Superdome with bags on their heads." So Peyton wouldn't aspire to be Marino or Phil Simms or Dan Fouts. "I never once heard him say, 'I want to be a pro football player,'" says his mother. "It was always, 'I want to play college football.'" He would be a college quarterback. In the South. Just like Archie.

And if he is not quite the folk hero in the South that his father was—who could be?—he is still a celebrity. Last fall he sat in a Tennessee dorm with teammate Will Newman and student Eric Barley. Struck by late-night hunger, Barley ordered a pizza



**Same World**

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with  
Craig Kilborn



**Mon-Thurs  
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**Different Take**



and was told the wait for delivery would be one hour. He asked Manning if he could use the quarterback's name.

"O.K.," said Manning, reluctantly.

"Five minutes," said the pizza guy.

When the pie arrived, the delivery man said to Manning, "You must sign this hat for the owner of the restaurant. Please sign it 'Welcome to America, Amir.'" And so Manning did.

In fact, his fame brings privileges Manning never imagined. On April 1 he attended a concert to celebrate the opening of the Lee Greenwood Theater in Gatlinburg, Tenn. (The invitation, unsolicited, had been delivered to Manning's apartment.) Near the end of the show, during which Manning had been introduced and serenaded with a chorus of *Rocky Top*, the Volunteers' anthem, a man in a suit hustled Manning to a backstage dressing room. "I walk in," says Manning, still amazed, "and there's George and Barbara and the governor." That would be former President Bush and his wife and Tennessee governor Don Sundquist. "Just the four of us," says Manning. "Next thing I know we're all posing for pictures together."

He is celebrated in ways that befuddle him, such as when dozens of Tennessee families name their babies Peyton and send photos to the Tennessee football office for the namesake to see.

Manning is not seeking such stardom; he is chasing an entire life—one that he has sought to re-create since he first listened to those Ole Miss tapes in high school. He can recite his father's Rebel lineups still: "Jernigan from Jackson, McClure from Hattiesburg. . . ." When he finishes, he gives a lopsided smile, the way he does when something strikes him as sweet or funny. "I would love to have played in the '60s," he says. "Now *that* would have been fun."

Perhaps he *is* playing in the '60s. His own version of the '60s. Manning may make an ideal quarterback for the mid-'90s, but in many ways he belongs on Nick at Nite. His language is a fusillade of yessirs and nosirs, each accompanied by a deferential nod. Last April, at 7:30 a.m. on the day of Tennessee's spring game, he was honored at a ceremony as the male athlete with the highest GPA in Tennessee's sophomore class. "Must be a soft sophomore class," he told the audience, holding the plaque in his hands, trying to suppress a smile. Last spring Manning did inspirational speaking engagements (for which NCAA rules forbid payment) at the buzz-saw rate of four a week. He was also chairman of the Knoxville Multiple Sclerosis Read-a-thon. "You can talk about Peyton for hours, and it sounds like some fairy tale," coach Fulmer says of his quarterback.

Even Manning's mistakes are the kind that a football star from a past era might commit. Last March 5, in the training room at Tennessee's Neyland-Thompson Sports Center, he mooned cross-country runner Malcolm Saxon while assistant trainer Jamie Whited, a woman, knelt to examine Manning's right foot. The 27-year-old Whited saw what he did and felt it was directed toward her. She reported the incident to the athletic department. In punishment, Manning was made to run sprints at 6 a.m. and was barred from the training table for two weeks. "What I did lasted maybe one second, and it was not directed toward her, and there's no way I thought she could

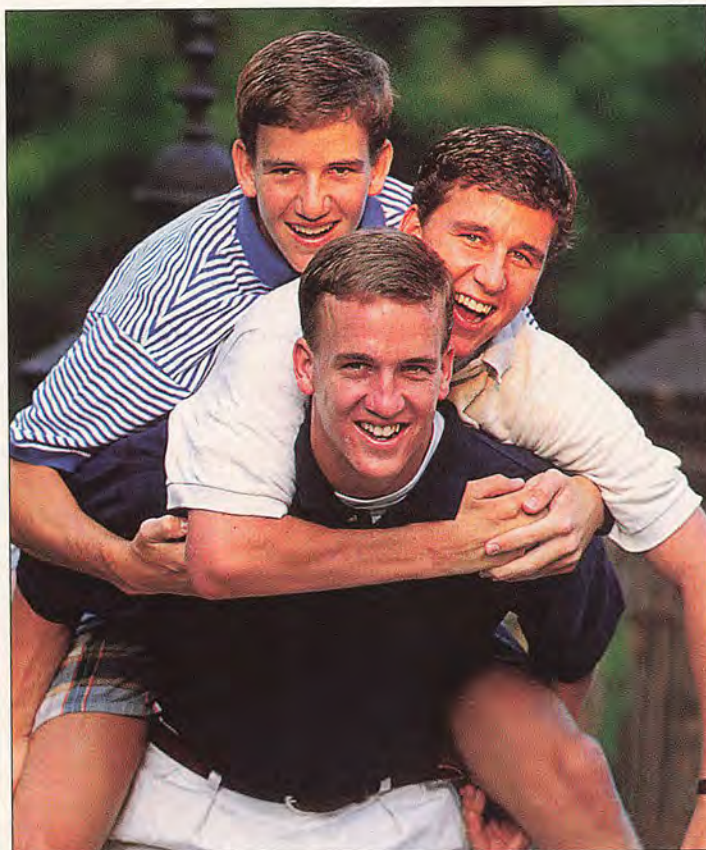
see," Manning says. "I like to play jokes with the guys. I realize now, I've got to be careful."

When it comes to the game itself, however, Manning is reverential in a way that is rare among college players. On game days he sits in front of his dressing cubicle and reads the official program from cover to cover before he puts on his pads. When he meets with Cutcliffe, who graduated from Alabama in 1976 and briefly played there, the conversation turns inevitably to some slice of SEC history. "Then you see him just light up," says Cutcliffe. "For so many kids, college football is a means to an end. Peyton has a true love of college football. He knows the way Saturday afternoons are supposed to smell in the South."

The smell is different now. Players are celebrated as much for their projected draft positions as for their college exploits. All the games are

televised, which demythologizes the participants. The difference between Archie's era and Peyton's is only highlighted by the fact that Archie played at the smallest university in the SEC and on a team made up entirely of Mississippians. "That's how I heard college football was, listening to my parents," says Peyton. "I'm trying to get the whole experience, but the game has changed a lot. We've got guys on our team from all over the country. They're all great guys, but everybody does his own thing. It's different, that's all."

And it's no reason to weep for Manning. It just turns out that in the throwback business, success is accompanied by a touch of disillusionment. "I think sometimes I talked too much," says Archie. "I never knew he was setting it in his mind that just because things were a certain way for me, they would be the same way for him. Something is missing for Peyton. He's on top of college football, and it's different from what he expected."



BILL FRANKS

**Peyton (bottom) and Eli (top) are carrying Cooper's dreams of football glory.**



Peyton had long imagined a route that would have brought him closer to the path that his father followed. In the fall of 1992, Cooper entered Ole Miss as a full-scholarship wide receiver. Peyton was beginning his junior year at Newman, and it was plain to see that even as a gawky teenager with a modest arm, he had vast potential. The letters from college football programs had already begun to arrive, including one handwritten by Florida State coach Bobby Bowden. Many more would follow, but Peyton had already made his decision. He would go to Mississippi, and he would play with his brother.

They had always complemented each other. Cooper, two years older, was carefree and cool. Peyton was intense and serious. (The third and last of the Manning children, Eli, 15, is a sophomore at Newman, where he will start at quarterback this fall.) Cooper kissed off his schoolwork and made decent grades, says Peyton, "because all of his teachers fell in love with him." Peyton treated every class as if it were contract law with Professor Kingsfield. "Here he was, hammering away at his homework in seventh grade," says Cooper. "I'm saying, 'Relax, you don't have to stay up till 1 a.m. over this math.'"

In the fall of 1991 Cooper and Peyton played their one season of football together, Peyton as Newman's sophomore quarterback, Cooper as a senior wide receiver. "That year made us buddies," Cooper says. Newman was 12-2. In the Louisiana Class 2A semifinals, against upstate power Haynesville, Newman lost 27-21 after Peyton was intercepted with 30 seconds to play. Cooper hung an arm around his little brother. Told him everything was fine.

In truth, everything was not fine. Cooper had played half the season with numbness in his right hand. He went to Oxford in August 1992, participated in two-a-days and even dressed for a

game. But the numbness had spread to his right leg. Archie took Cooper to specialists, and in late September, Archie was told that his son had spinal stenosis, a congenital narrowing of the spinal cavity. Football was out of the question.

Archie and Olivia broke the news to Cooper on a Friday night in New Orleans. It is a subject that moves Peyton nearly to tears. Three days after Cooper was told of his condition, he went back to Oxford. Peyton had written him a short keep-your-chin-up note. And Cooper left Peyton a note that would help redefine their relationship. It said, in part:

*I would like to live my dream of playing football through you. Although I cannot play anymore, I know I can still get the same feeling out of watching my little brother do what he does best. I know now that we are good for each other, because I need you to be serious and look at things from a different perspective. I am good for you, as well, to take things light. I love you, Peyt, and only great things lay ahead for you. Thanks for everything on and off the field.*

In June 1993, Cooper had corrective spinal surgery that left him almost paralyzed. Three years later his right arm and leg are still weak, and he has no feeling at all in his left leg. Last spring he sat in his Oxford apartment and hit his left leg with the heel of his left hand. "Nothing. Can't feel it at all," he said. "The doctors told me after the surgery that [the feeling] would come back in two years or it wouldn't come back at all." After the operation he had to relearn how to walk. His hands had been quick and sure, but now he can't have a serious game of catch with Peyton or play pickup basketball. Cooper graduated from Ole Miss in four years and worked last fall on Rebels coach Tommy Tuberville's television show, taking a microphone into the audience like Phil Donahue. "I call him Mr. Oxford," says Peyton of his brother.

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Cooper has passed on to Peyton some of his roguish charm and has chipped away some of his little brother's seriousness. It was as if Cooper's blithe spirit had inhabited Peyton during the mooning incident. "Cooper moons everybody," says Peyton. Last fall Cooper attended the Ole Miss-LSU game in Baton Rouge, and when a passerby saw him walking near the stadium with a group of people, beer in hand, the guy shouted, "Peyton, what are you doing?" Cooper laughed and shouted, "Just drinkin' whiskey and chasin' women is all."

Because of Cooper's injury, Peyton not only confronted what every player denies ("Football could end, so you might want to think about getting a degree along the way," Peyton says) but also began considering schools other than Ole Miss. Tennessee fit his needs best: It was in the South, it had a tradition of good quarterbacks and offensive lines, it had great facilities, and, most important, it had people with whom Peyton instantly connected—Cutcliffe in particular. When Peyton signed with the Volunteers, his parents got some vicious phone calls from Ole Miss fans, calls that hurt. Cooper, however, wore a Tennessee cap around the Ole Miss campus the day of the signing, daring anybody to rip his brother.

The bond that Cooper's letter to Peyton helped forge nearly four years ago has never been stronger. The brothers talk at least twice a week, even during the football season. Peyton tells Cooper the game plans; Cooper helps keep Peyton loose. On Saturdays, Cooper usually figures out a way to get access to the sidelines and find his brother's ear. In their daydreams, Peyton sees defenses spread out before him and threads completions to Cooper through their soft spots; Cooper sees himself playing again.

**Vols fans have given Manning their love; now they want him to give them a national title.**

Each sees the other. "I always see us playing Georgia, in the daylight, always in the day-

light," says Cooper. "We're driving down the field, the place is packed, Peyton hits me on a little post corner route. . . ."

"We're both in Ole Miss uniforms, gray and red," says Peyton. "I picture how it would have been. He comes into my dream, catching a pass. Then he throws the ball up into the stands. . . . Touchdown! Touchdown, Ole Miss!"

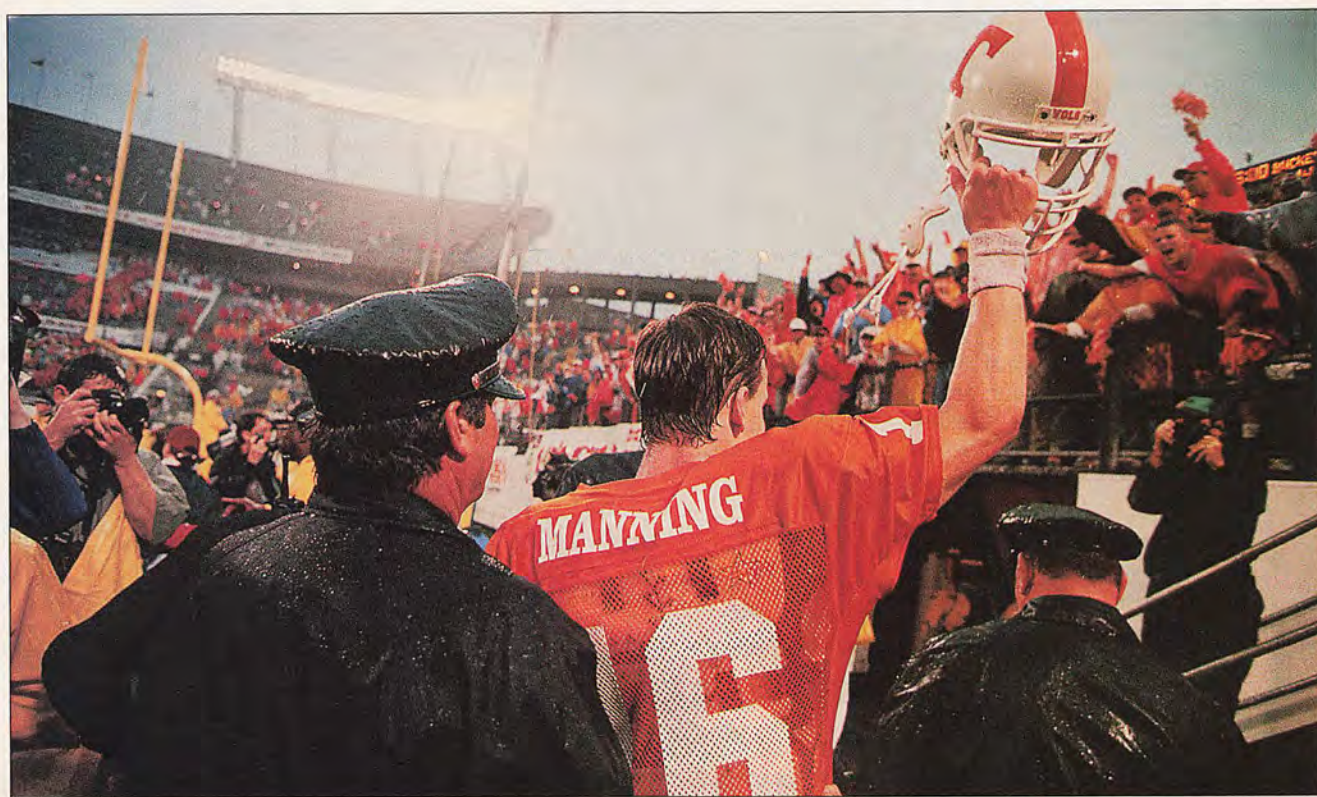
Father and son are sitting on a couch in the den of the Mannings' yellow house in the Garden District of New Orleans. Archie is at one end, Peyton at the other, both of them signing plastic footballs to be given away at a Newman function that weekend. They also are signing other items—real footballs, hats, jerseys—that are regularly sent to the house. Their work is quiet, interrupted only by the occasional "Finished with that one?" from Archie, followed by a soft "Yessir" from Peyton. They could be brothers, and in a sense that's what they are. Brothers in history.

Yes, the game Peyton's father knew has changed forever. Yes, Peyton will soon play for more money in a season than most men make in a lifetime. But this autumn can be the sweetest of all.

There is a rematch with Florida on Sept. 21, a trip to Memphis 12 days later for an emotional game against Ole Miss. The national-championship game is the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans, two miles from the bedroom where Peyton listened to those scratchy old tapes. He can do things that his father never did: win an SEC title, go undefeated. "This fall," says Peyton, "this fall could be something else."

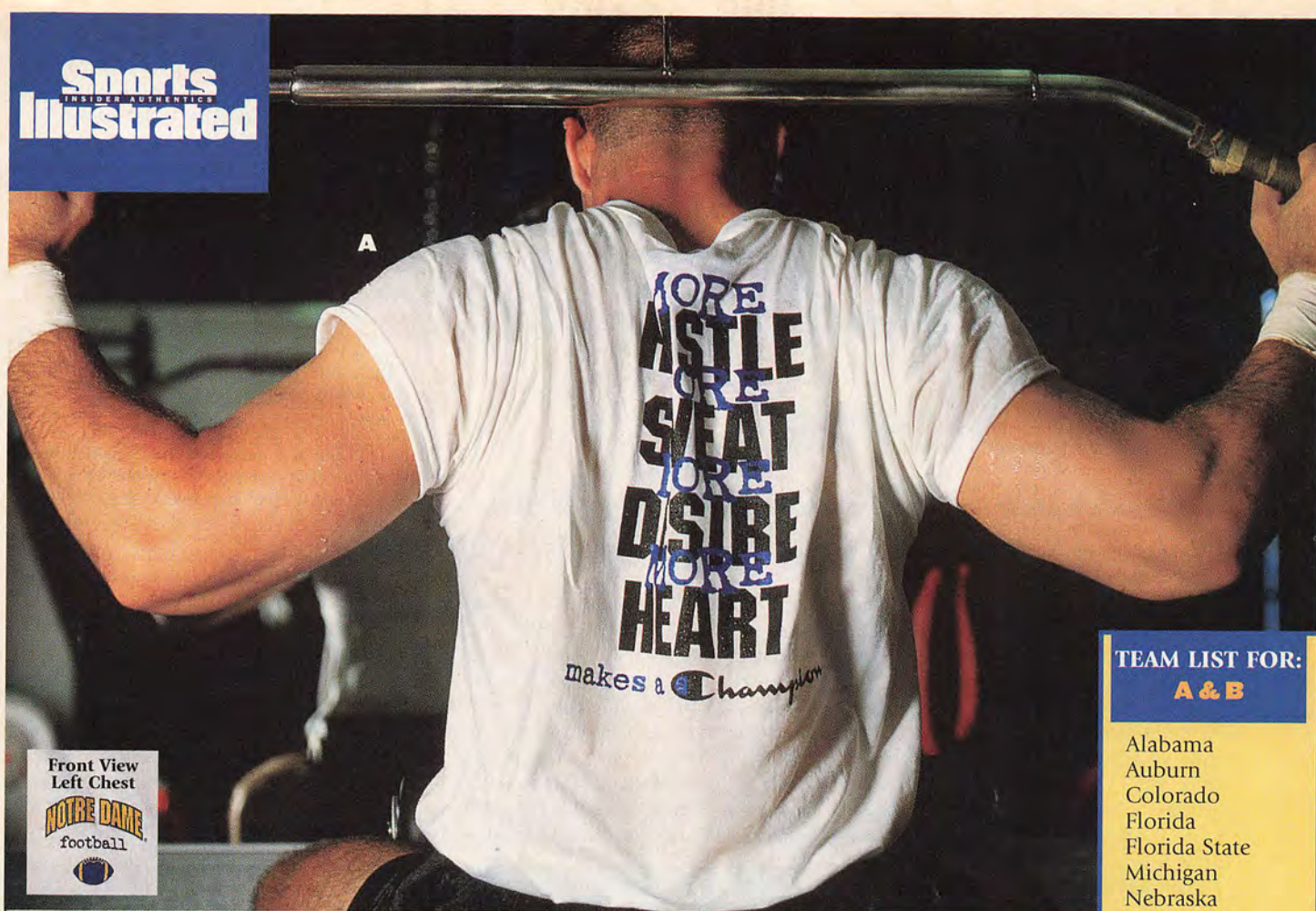
In this home there is a syrupy faith, a belief that history doesn't die. "I'm telling you, college football is special," says Archie.

He reaches to his left and pulls a new football from a box. He signs it and passes it to his right. Peyton scribbles his name on the ball and sets it gently on the coffee table. Archie reaches for another new football. Sunlight streams through long windows. The only noise is the squeak of a black marker against the fresh, pebbled leather.



BRIAN SPRUIELL





Front View  
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UCLA



**INSIDE**

# Baseball

**BY TIM KURKJIAN**

## Brave Moves

*Keeping up with the Joneses in Atlanta just got a little harder • A September-prospects preview • The Hall Call*

WITH THE best record in baseball and a seven-game lead in the National League East, the Braves didn't grow cautious, they got more daring. They traded for Marlins third baseman Terry Pendleton; they moved All-Star Chipper Jones from third to shortstop, where he hadn't played regularly since 1993 (and that was in the minor leagues, before he had major knee surgery in 1994); and they called up 19-year-old Andruw Jones from Triple A Richmond, put him in rightfield and made him number 2 in the batting order. Those are a lot of changes for a successful team. They could backfire and hurt clubhouse chemistry, but it's more likely they will make Atlanta a stronger team when October arrives.

First off, Pendleton is one of the game's true leaders and is still a good clutch hitter. Secondly, Andruw Jones might be the reliable rightfielder the Braves have lacked since David Justice dislocated his shoulder in May. Calling Jones up on Aug. 14 gave the Braves two weeks to determine whether he's ready to play in the major leagues; if he is, they can add him to their playoff roster by the midnight Aug. 31 deadline. "If he's as good as everyone says," says Atlanta first baseman Fred McGriff, "he'll be O.K. up here." Finally, by moving Chipper Jones to shortstop, the Braves have a 30-homer, 100-RBI man in their middle infield instead of light-hitting Rafael Belliard or Ed Giovanola.

Jeff Blauser, who was the starting shortstop until mid-July, when he broke his left hand, is due back in a couple of weeks. But he wasn't playing very well (.248 average, 22 errors) when he got hurt, and if Jones proves he can play short, the Braves will probably keep him there through the postseason.

The key is Andruw Jones, who is thought to be the first player since Phillies pitcher

Pat Combs in 1989 to start a season in A ball and go on to Double A, Triple A and the big leagues in the same year. Along the way Jones hit a combined .339 with 34 homers, 92 RBIs and 30 steals. And he's as good defensively as he is offensively: Some scouts say he's on a par with Atlanta's Gold Glove centerfielder, Marquis Grissom.

Jones is from Curaçao in the Netherlands Antilles. He speaks four languages:

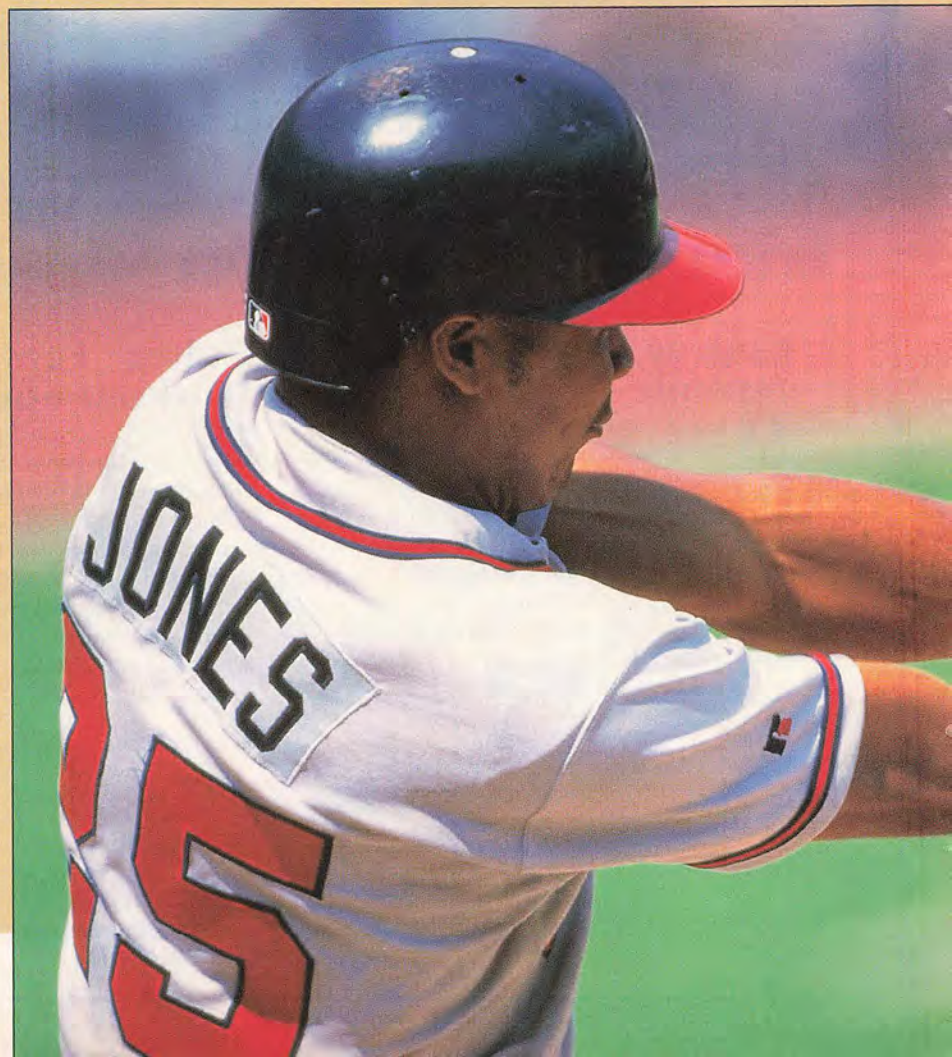
Dutch, English, Spanish and Papiamentu (the Creole language of the Dutch Caribbean islands). He went to a Braves tryout camp in his homeland in 1993 and was so impressive that he was signed at age 16 by Braves scout Giovanni Viceiza. Bobby Dews, the minor league field coordinator for the Braves, told Atlanta manager Bobby Cox, "When Andruw gets to the big leagues, he'll be an All-Star every year."

In his debut on Aug. 15 Jones went 1 for 5 with an RBI single, had an outfield assist and made a throwing error in an 8-5 win over the Phillies. He had a better second game, belting a triple and a homer in a 5-4 victory over the Pirates on Aug. 16. He admits he was surprised to have been called up so soon, but he is not awed about being the youngest player in the majors. "I don't worry about age," he says.

### Prospects on Parade

Andruw Jones isn't the only top prospect to watch over the next few weeks. Here are four others whom baseball people are excited about and hoping to get a glimpse of when rosters are expanded in September.

• Vladimir Guerrero, outfielder, Expos. Hitting .363 with 17 homers at Double A Harrisburg, Pa., Guerrero, 20, had an im-





pressive .446 on-base percentage at week's end because he walks a fair amount (48 times in 427 plate appearances) and doesn't strike out much (36 times). But what impresses Montreal general manager Jim Beattie most about the 6' 2", 180-pound Guerrero is his attitude. "How many guys have we seen who have great tools but bad makeup?" Beattie says. "He'll hit a routine grounder to shortstop and beat it out, because he always runs hard."

Guerrero, one of nine children, still sends most of his \$1,200 monthly paycheck home to the Dominican Republic so his parents can build a house. The Expos actually left Guerrero at Double A this year so that his attitude wouldn't be spoiled. He would have been promoted, but Triple A Ottawa is not in the playoffs and has some unhappy veterans, so Guerrero remains at Harrisburg, where there's a great atmosphere and a pennant race. There's a chance Guerrero won't be called up because nowadays general managers don't want players unnecessarily accruing service time, but he'll definitely compete for an every-day job in Montreal in '97. Mets scout Carmen Fusco says Guerrero is "as complete a player as I've ever seen."

- Dmitri Young, first baseman, Cardinals.

This switch-hitter is batting .334 with 15 homers and 15 steals for Triple A Louisville. He was the fourth overall pick in the '91 draft, and recently he has helped his stock rise by dropping some 20 pounds, to 240. (Last year with Double A Arkansas, Young heard chants of "Pork Chop!" from the fans in Wichita.)

- Mike Cameron, outfielder, White Sox. He is hitting .293 with 27 homers and 70 RBIs for Double A Birmingham and should replace Danny Tartabull in right next year.

- Nomar Garciaparra, shortstop, Red Sox. A brilliant defensive player and a born leader, Garciaparra could move shortstop John Valentin to second base or third (if third baseman Tim Lincecum were to become a free agent and leave) next year.

## No Room in the Hall

Although no players were voted into the Hall of Fame this year (except those inducted by the veterans' committee), there might soon be a logjam at the gates of Cooperstown. And some deserving players are going to be left out in the crush because it's unlikely that the Baseball Writers Association of America will induct, say, six players in any year.

In 1999 five players with Hall creden-

tials will be eligible: Nolan Ryan, Robin Yount and George Brett are locks for induction, Carlton Fisk is highly probable and Dale Murphy is borderline. In 2000, Goose Gosage (possible) and Jack Morris (shaky) head the list of newly eligible players. Then in 2001, Kirby Puckett and Dave Winfield are sure bets. And the following year Ozzie Smith should be inducted, and he'll be joined by Eddie Murray and Dennis Eckersley, if those two call it quits after this season.

One of the players who could get overlooked in the clutter of candidates is outfielder Andre Dawson, who last week announced his retirement, effective at the end of the season. His omission would be a shame: The Hawk belongs in the Hall.

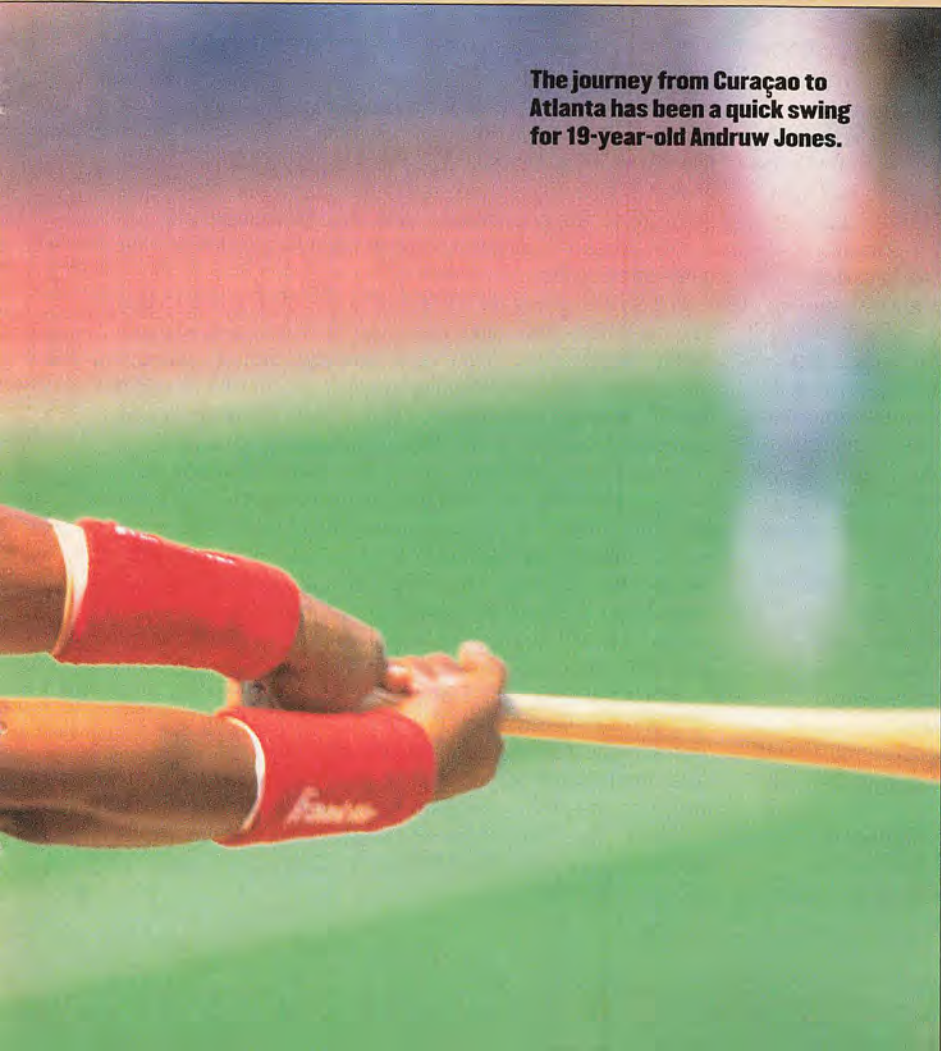
Dawson has a career average of .280 (Ralph Kiner and Reggie Jackson are the only Hall of Fame outfielders with lower lifetime batting averages), but he has 437 homers (only Dave Kingman, with 442, has more and is not in the Hall), 1,587 RBIs (more than Hall of Famers Willie McCovey and Willie Stargell) and 314 steals. Bobby Bonds, Barry Bonds and Willie Mays are the only others in the 300-homer, 300-steal club. Dawson also has had more than 50 extra-base hits in 13 seasons. The only National League players who had more were Hank Aaron (18 seasons) and Stan Musial (16). And Dawson was the MVP in 1987 with the Cubs, becoming the first player voted MVP from a last-place team.

Dawson won eight Gold Gloves and had one of the strongest throwing arms in history. "And as far as character, there was no one better," says Phillies coach Larry Bowa. Dawson played hard every night even though he had sore, scarred knees most of the last seven years of his career. Some of his numbers may be borderline for the Hall, but his class should put him in.

## Short Hops

Orioles DH Eddie Murray has led a Baltimore resurgence by hitting seven homers in fewer than 100 at bats since returning to the O's in a trade on July 21. At week's end he needed only two homers to reach 500 for his career, and he recently passed another milestone that put him in exclusive company: He hit into his 300th double play. Here are the top five in that category since World War II (accurate records weren't kept before then): Hank Aaron (328), Carl Yastrzemski (323), Dave Winfield (319), Jim Rice (315) and Murray (303). . . . Through Sunday, Reds reliever Lee Smith needed five more appearances to pass Lindy McDaniel (987) for the most career appearances by a pitcher who has never pitched in a World Series. ■

**The journey from Curaçao to Atlanta has been a quick swing for 19-year-old Andruw Jones.**



AL TELEMANS



# The Trophy from Hell

Take it from the quarterback, no one in his right mind would want to win the Heisman

by Leigh Montville

THE QUARTERBACK of the big-time football team at the large state university appears at the door of his school's energetic sports information director. The new season is approaching, and the public-relations machinery is already working at full steam. The quarterback is terrified.

"What's the deal here?" he shouts.

"What deal?" the S.I.D. replies.

"This!" the quarterback yells, throwing a glossy, four-color, 48-page magazine across the room. The quarterback's picture is on the cover of the publication. He is shown in the middle of his passing motion, the ball sure to leave his hand before he is smothered by an onrushing lineman in the uniform of the large state university's traditional rival.

The words HEISMAN HOPEFUL are splashed across the photo. Now the quarterback looks as if he has been told he has contracted a rare disease. "Who told you to do this?" he screams.

"Nobody . . . everybody," the S.I.D. sputters. "This is what we do for our great players. We want you to get the award for being the best. We print up the magazine and send it to the Heisman voters, and in December you get the award. You don't like the magazine? The pictures of you in your little Pop Warner uniform? The stories about your mom, your dad, your dog?"

"You don't like living?" the quarterback bellows, slamming his meaty hands on the S.I.D.'s desk.

Heisman hopeful. The quarterback has been doing a little research while on his highly paid no-show summer job as a lifeguard at a nude beach. He has learned he would rather be driving the third car in a five-car pileup than win the Heisman Trophy. He would rather be attacked by rabid squirrels than have his name mentioned in the same breath as this award.

"You want me to play for the New York Knicks?" he shouts. "Is that it? You don't think I can play pro football?"

"Ah, Charlie Ward, 1993," the S.I.D. says. "No, we think—"

"You think I should play in Canada? I'm too short?"

"You must mean Doug Flutie, 1984. No, of course not—"

"You think I'm going to be a bust, ride the bench?"

"Do you mean Andre Ware, 1989? Ty Detmer, 1990? Desmond Howard, 1991? Gino Torretta, 1992?"

"You must be crazy," the quarterback yells. "You must think I can't read or something. You want me to be drafted 14th like Eddie George, 1995, rather than Number 1?"

The dreams the quarterback has had since childhood suddenly seem doomed. The only question is whether his short-range future is darker than his long-range future. Hasn't



anyone else paid attention to what happens to the winners of this award? Why would anyone *want* to win it?

"You think I'm going to wind up in court with some Dream Team of lawyers defending me?" he screams. "You think I'm going to be trying on gloves for the jury and hearing debates about my Bruno Magli shoes?"

"Yes, well, O.J. Simpson, 1968, is an exception," the S.I.D. replies.

"You think I'm going to wind up in the slammer for counterfeiting?"

"Is that Billy Cannon, 1959?"

"You think I'll wind up on drugs?"

"Are you referring to Charles White, 1979? George Rogers, 1980?"

"You think I'll die young?"

"Ernie Davis, 1961?"

"What are you trying to do to me?"

The S.I.D. tries to offer a defense. He grabs an almanac and starts to shout out names. Barry Sanders, 1988, has done just fine. Tim Brown, 1987. Bo Jackson, 1985, got hurt, but he played two pro sports for a while. Jim Plunkett, 1970, won a Super Bowl or two. What about Florida coach Steve Spurrier, 1966? He's doing great. Roger Staubach, 1963. Paul Hornung, 1956.

"You think I'm going to be suspended for gambling?" the quarterback yells.

The S.I.D. throws his hands in the air. It's too late to argue. The magazines have been mailed to the voters and to media outlets around the country. The campaign cannot be stopped. The quarterback is a Heisman hopeful whether he likes it or not. TV stations have received clips of him throwing during games and studying at the library and visiting local hospitals.

The quarterback begins to sob. He says that part of him wants to take care of this Heisman business with simple failure. He could throw a few interceptions, fumble a few times, lose a couple of big games to knock the large state university out of the national rankings. That would end all speculation. Another part of him, the part that surely will triumph, knows he cannot do that. He will do the best he can on every down in every game. He will try to win and accept his punishment like a man.

"It'll be all right," the S.I.D. says. "You'll be rich. You'll be a star. You'll walk out of the Downtown Athletic Club with the most famous trophy awarded to an individual in U.S. sports, that little running back with the ball tucked under one arm and with the other arm pushing back the onrushing cares of the world."

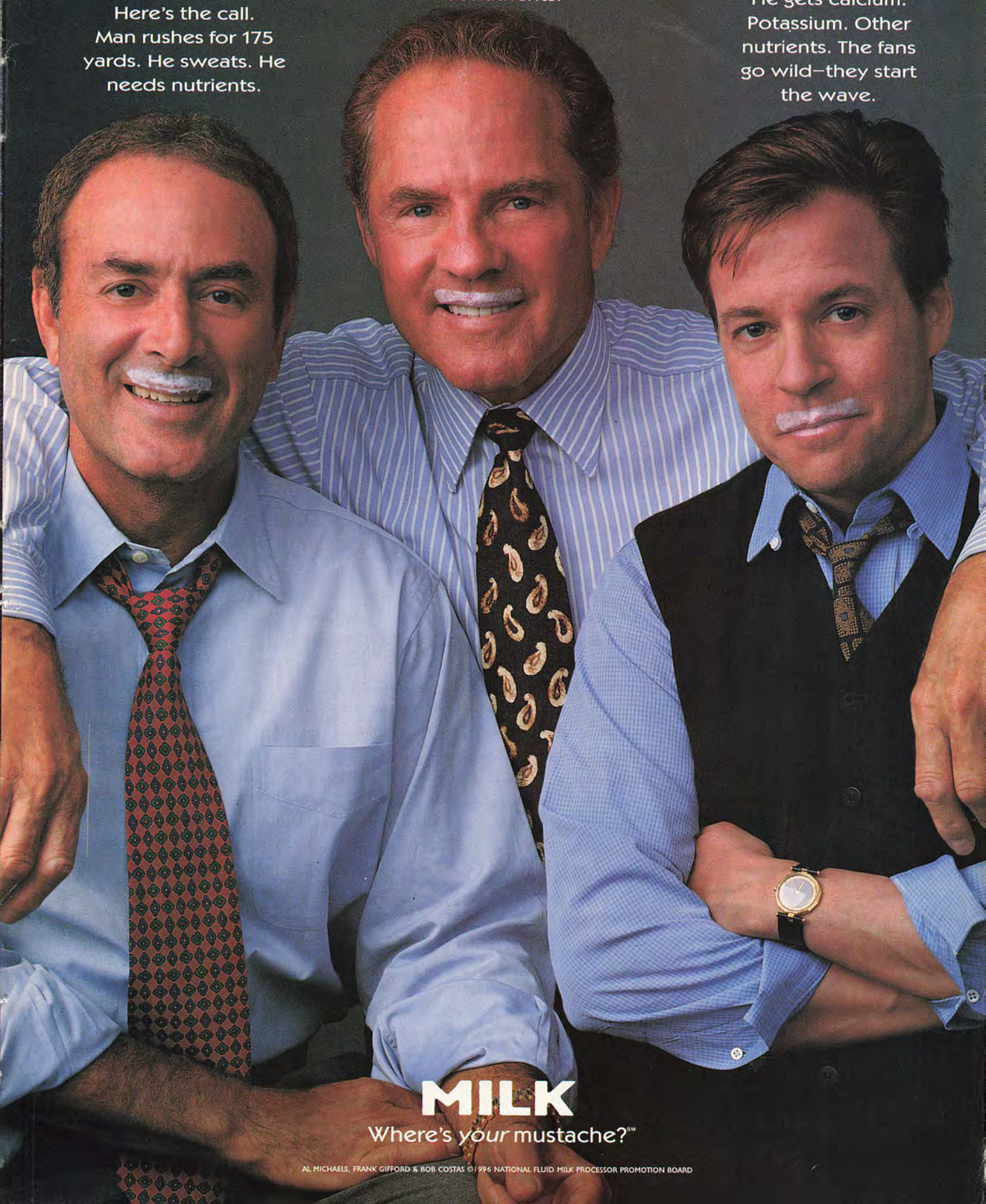
"Yeah," the quarterback says sadly. "I can put the trophy in the back of my white Ford Bronco for the ride to Canada to play pro basketball."



Here's the call.  
Man rushes for 175  
yards. He sweats. He  
needs nutrients.

He drinks a leading sports  
drink. He replenishes fluids,  
not nutrients.

Later, he drinks milk.  
He gets calcium.  
Potassium. Other  
nutrients. The fans  
go wild—they start  
the wave.



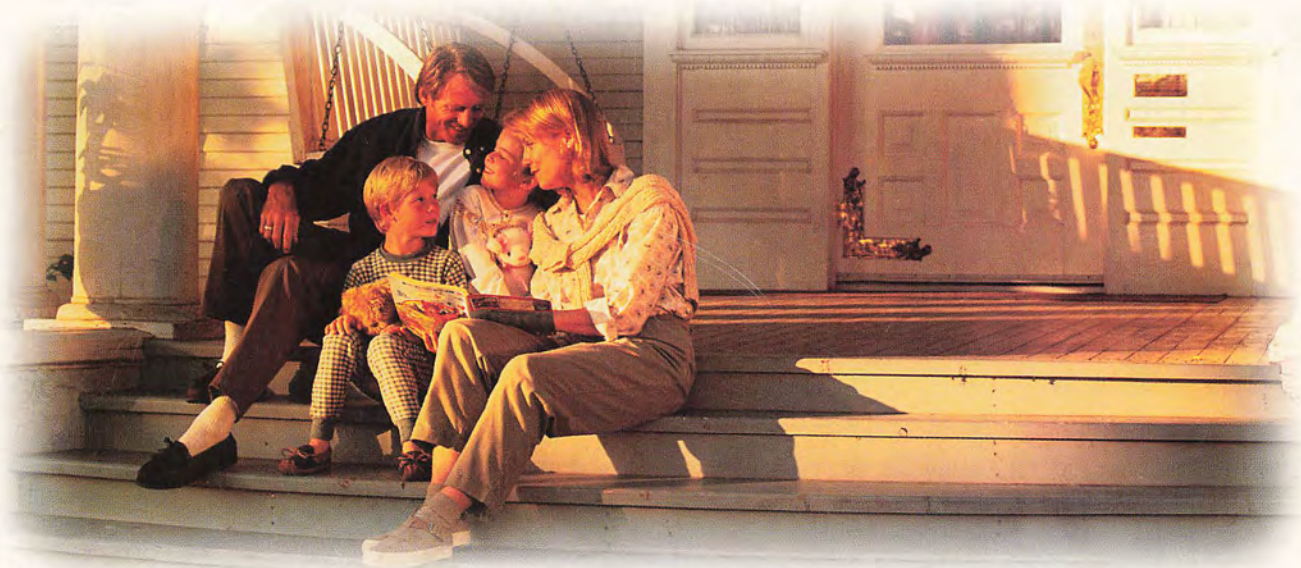
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